"The Myth of the Negro Past" *John F. Szwed*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts – June 24, 1972, 50 cents

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McGovern's Economics

Is His Arithmetic Correct?

Melville J. Ulmer

Southern Democrats – *Paul R. Wieck*

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Too Clever by Half – *The Editors*

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TRB

from Washington ®
June 24, 1972

Remote Control

We are having lunch six miles up—sky full of popcorn clouds. "Red or white?" asks the pretty Malaysian hostess in a stunning Oriental dress. We left the Singapore Hilton at 6 a.m. and will end in Honolulu at some incomprehensible hour, for with this International Date Line you never know whether it is yesterday, today or tomorrow. The captain's voice over the intercom says casually, "On our left the Mekong Delta."

The sea is deep blue and some of the beaches of Vietnam below us are yellow sand. Those may be toy airplanes on that matchbox field.

"Passing on the left the city of Vinh Long," says the captain informatively. Some of us look down from our pressurized jet. At 500 mph the tortured land is soon passed. The lunch is abalone with minced pork, wine, "Savarin aux fruits."

We are fighting a depersonalized war down there, to save our national honor. Mr. Nixon has said he isn't going to be the first President to lose a war. The Harris poll says 79 percent want a US pullout but, on the other hand, 45 percent (to 38 percent) would oppose peace by accepting a coalition government that included Communists. So we must fight. We can't let our President down.

Any day now the Communists may throw in the sponge and let us end this senseless slaughter. For our boys, fortunately, the actual killing has become increasingly remote. In the bombers, anyway, the soldier is separated from the consequence of his action. The difficulty is that a seismic detector can't always differentiate between a truckload of arms and a school bus. But that's the hazard of war, isn't it? We can be complacent, for our side is free from the fear of retaliation.

The fields of Vietnam are being scientifically cratered. It's a small country but even at that Mr. Laird says it will cost us $3 billion to $5 billion more to do the job. Between 1965 and 1971 bombing dug some 26 million craters with an average depth of 25 feet and diameter of 40 feet. Along with that, herbicide spraying killed perhaps half the hardwood forest west and north of Saigon, and maybe half of all the mangrove forests. We stopped that a year ago after devastating around 5.5 million acres, largely because foreign nations were saying nasty things about us. Some of the countries at the Stockholm conference, for example, rejected the US as savior of the environment while practicing ecocide in Indochina.

There has been a price for this at home, of course, of helplessness and frustration, of dejection and despair. Worse still, probably, is the loss of confidence of many people in their institutions and their government. A lot of people have avoided this simply by closing their minds to the war, tuning it out. You can numb your mind if you set about it properly, but it is an art and some people are better at it than others. On the other hand there is always this uncomfortable question, whether killing women and children in villages is as bad as not caring about killing women and children in villages?

America is in this fix, I think, partly because of our odd form of government. More and more we have been getting away from shared responsibility in Washington, and massing power at the top, largely in the President. The abdication of authority by Congress has been the most conspicuous change of government in Washington in 50 years. Congress has been found an unnecessary element in carrying on this war, and so has the press, and so finally has the public. They all oppose the war but it goes on. The important factors are the Pentagon and the President. They are going to save our national honor and they are going to preserve Mr. Nixon from being the first President, etc.

Curiously enough, the original theory of our government was that the chief executive would be subordinate to the legislature, but things developed in precisely the opposite direction. Rexford Tugwell wrote about this in 1960, *The Enlargement of the Presidency*, and even then saw that the legislature, under the pressure of a high-energy economy, was "gradually being reduced to argumentation, to investigation and to acquiescence." This reporter sat with majority leader Mike Mansfield at a breakfast the other day, a gentle, likeable man, who frankly bemoaned congressional passivity on Vietnam. Well, he is not the type to sound a tocsin. The record of Congress on the war has been contemptible, and the White House has treated it with contempt.

Everybody lies to Congress. Congress banned use of funds to subsidize foreign troops in Laos, but the administration flagrantly violates the ban. Congress approved $10 million in humanitarian aid for the Pakistani government which the General Accounting Office now finds was diverted into fortifications. A senior official at the time assured senators that there was "no evidence" of such irregularities.

The army lies, and Congress is the last to hear about it: *New Tork Times* man Seymour Hersh just revealed the suppressed secret army report about the 1968 Mylai massacre; the report found that the cover-up was "made at every level" from bottom to top. You remember the photos of Mylai? They were ultimately exposed by the press—a pile of women and old men shot down in cold blood, with the buttocks of one slain baby showing in the foreground. . . . Well, national honor, you know.

When Mr. Nixon was in Moscow Comrade Brezhnev must have envied him his power. Comrade Brezhnev doesn't go through our election process, but he has to clear a lot of things with others. The American President can order an invasion of Cambodia on his own. Under a parliamentary democracy, if Heath should fire his foreign secretary, Sir Alec Home, the latter would still have his powerful seat in the Commons. If Mr. Nixon fired Kissinger he would just have to go back to Harvard. Mr. Nixon is boss.

Franklin Roosevelt had two press conferences a week; Mr. Nixon held his last formal one June 1, 1971; yes, over a year ago. Jeer if you want at the press, but it is a safeguard of democracy; it links the President with reality. The Nixon administration has deliberately set out to downgrade it. Mr. Nixon is the most isolated President since Hoover. That is the trouble with our system of elected monarchy, particularly where you have a man who is reclusive and introspective, lacking warm and easy relationship with the public. The problem goes deeper than Mr. Nixon, though. We have elevated the symbolic office of the presidency so that we feel it must not be tarnished; it must not be diminished by military defeat. We must save face.

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Too Clever By Half

Wilbur Mills delights in surprise, and the inscrutable chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee surprised everyone by introducing his very own tax reform bill. The Speaker of the House first learned it from the newspapers. Senator McGovern promptly welcomed it and said it might be better than any reform plan McGovern is recommending—an overindulgence in a courtesy natural to McGovern, a courtesy to which Mr. Mills has become accustomed and to which he is sometimes entitled.

What does Mills want Congress to do? He wants it to terminate 54 tax preferences—18 at a time, in 1974, 1975 and 1976. Out in three stages will go bath and baby: oil and mineral depletion allowances and capital gains, accelerated depreciation as well as exclusion of sick pay from taxable income, deductions for political contributions or charities or unusual medical expenses, deductions for interest on home mortgages or taxes on dwellings. And then? Then Congress can start from scratch, voting new loopholes, or putting old ones back into the tax law. For Mills does not mean "that Congress may not want, when it considers these provisions, to continue a large proportion of them." The purpose of his Tax Policy Review Act, he says, is to "assure that reform will be considered . . . in an orderly and systematic review." It serves the further purpose of allowing the chairman to favor reform without endorsing reforms: "I am in no way expressing an opinion about the merits or demerits of any of the provisions. . . . In fact, many of these provisions appear to me to be desirable under present circumstances." Purely as theater, it would be interesting to see what Congress would do, were it forced to debate tax favors one by one and vote each up or down. Each member would then have to be recorded on each contested benefit—an agony which he is mercifully spared by the present procedure: the Ways and Means Committee now wraps up and sends its tax package to the floor with a closed rule, to be accepted or rejected in toto.

How seriously shall we take Mills' intervention? His bill has been introduced in the Senate by the majority leader, Mr. Mansfield, and when Mills and Mansfield put their heads together, it commands attention. "I believe that the notion of unfairness about the tax code is justified," Mansfield has said. "Something needs to be done to give assurance that everyone will pay their fair share of the tax burden. . . .

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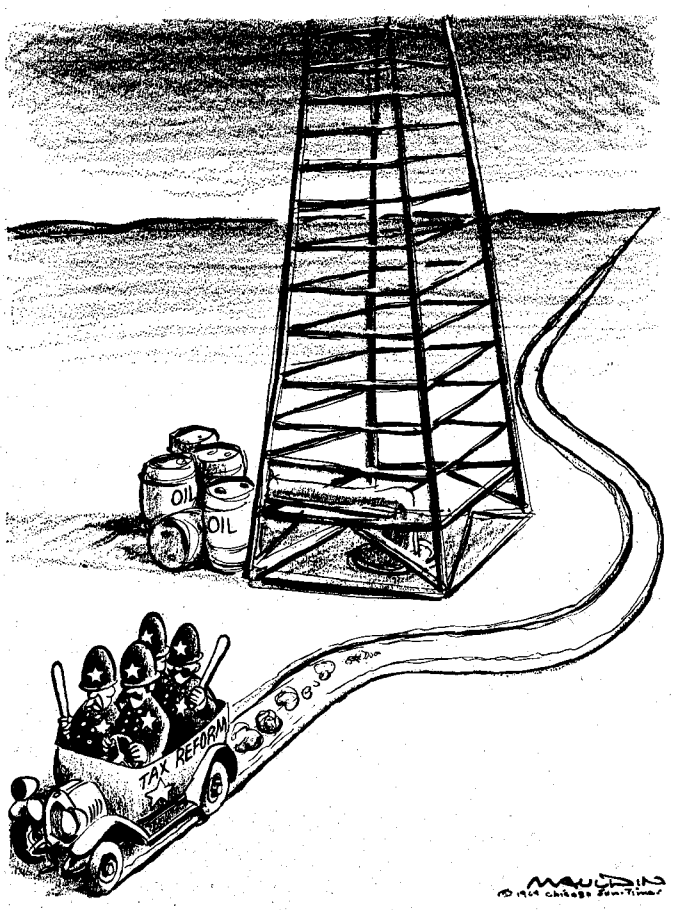
This measure in effect returns the initiative for tax writing to the Congress as a continuing matter as envisioned in the Constitution." As a token of *his* seriousness, Mansfield, before introducing the measure in the Senate, consulted with Finance Committee chairman Russell Long (D, La.).

Wiping the slate clean and then deciding which loopholes do or don't serve the public interest might be beneficial. So it appears to the very reform-minded congressman from Wisconsin, Les Aspin. He finds it "extremely heartening that Mr. Mills has apparently come down so strongly on the side of tax reform. . . . Many of the more blatant tax loopholes will not stand up under recorded votes in the House." Aspin had introduced a similar but tougher bill last March, for which he had rounded up 23 cosponsors. Mr. Aspin's confidence argues for the purity of Mr. Mills' intentions and perhaps the political sagacity of his approach. And yet it should be noted that members of Congress plan to add a specific tax-reform rider to the debt-ceiling bill now before Mills' committee. And Mills opposes the move; indeed he may have thought he could undercut it by introducing his own bill. On the first day of debt hearings, the chairman made it known that *his* measure would not be attached to the debt bill—"hearings will be required."

Aside from their contribution to delaying reform, why are new hearings needed? Not to educate Wilbur Mills. He knows the tax law. He has been on Ways and Means since 1942 and chairman since 1958. In 1959 he held extensive tax revision hearings, which took testimony from over 100 expert witnesses. According to the committee press release, these hearings were designed "to develop specific legislative proposals for extensive revision of the income tax. Chairman Mills emphasized that constructive tax revision cannot be accomplished overnight. Extreme care and thoroughgoing analysis, therefore, will be required. . . ." Now—13 years later—Mills finds himself unable to endorse a single substantive reform—more "hearings will be required."



Mills' maneuver has annoyed ranking Republican John Byrnes (R, Wis.), who sees the chairman taking credit for reform when he is doing no more than propose further study—three years of it. "One doesn't need to repeal the law to study and review it," Byrnes points out. "All that is needed is a determination by the chairman and committee majority that they really want to reform and revise the items that have been listed." Mills sidesteps the charge by saying blandly, "I know that the committee is always interested in tax reform."

And so, each in his fashion, are all the interests, led by oil. If Mills' "Tax Policy Review Act" were passed, they would lose no time lobbying for the reenactment of this or that favor. The public's defenders would have a whale of a fight on their hands to hold onto whatever is good in present law. And they could not even be sure that Mr. Mills would be on their side when they get down to those politically hazardous choices about who's to be squeezed and who's to be succored. Holed up somewhere in the hills, there may be a citizen who believes he ought to pay higher taxes, or that another should pay less: in him there beats the heart of a real reformer. But it's a rare beat.

Mills has often had his way by relying on a coalition of the 10 Republicans and a few conservative Democrats on his 25 member committee. This time, with Byrnes—and probably all 10 Republicans—against him, Mills will not have it so easy. There are rumors that he is already backing away from his bill. Ranking Democrats on Ways and Means, Al Ullman (D, Ore.) and James Burke (D, Mass.) have criticized the measure, and unless Mills is prepared to fight, the committee will bury it, leaving Senator Mansfield as the only real hope for its passage. Mansfield could attach the measure to a Senate tax bill; then the ball would be back in Mills' court.

Mills has made a shrewd move that brought him immense favorable publicity, left observers guessing, and committed him to nothing. That's his loophole. And it would be a wry commentary on the credulity of reformers if they were to accept Mills' word that—after 30 years on the committee—he feels the need of more hearings, more deliberation, before he can bring himself to take a position on which reforms are needed and which not. The British have an expression for it: "too clever by half."

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Revising Social Security

The Senate Finance Committee has completed action on its bill to raise social security taxes and benefits, extend Medicare and impose controversial work requirements on welfare recipients. The social security provisions, subject to amendment when the measure is considered by the full Senate, differ in a number of respects from a comparable bill passed by the House and from other, more sweeping proposals made by Senators Muskie and Mondale. Under the committee-approved bill, social security taxes and benefits would be increased overall by 10 percent. The current 5.2 percent tax rate would go up immediately to 5.7 percent. The wage ceiling—the highest income on which the tax is assessed—would go from $9000 to $10,200. An expected amendment would boost benefits 20 percent.

The social security tax is something of an upside down income tax: it hits poor and lower-middle-income families harder than the well-to-do. Compared with other federal taxes, it's simple and effective, and that may partly explain why no one has fundamentally changed it since it became part of FDR's New Deal. Besides, people rarely complain about the social security tax because they consider it a form of insurance that eventually pays for itself in retirement benefits. Congress, aware of this tolerance, has raised the tax rate 15 times since 1935. At present it stands at 5.2 percent—that's how much is taken from every employee's first $9000 in wages each year. The new welfare bill passed by the House (H.R. 1) would boost this rate to 5.4 percent in 1972, 6.2 percent in 1975 and 7.4 percent in 1977 to cover expanded benefits. Rep. Wilbur Mills (D, Ark.), trying to take the sting out of the new bill, has introduced an amendment that would increase the tax rate more gradually to a level of 6.1 percent in 1977. Congress and the administration feel confident they can ask for these increases despite the fact that rumors of a tax revolt provoked them to cut back other federal taxes in 1969.

Written to aid the neediest workers, the social security tax doesn't function the way the personal and corporate income taxes do; it doesn't demand more of those who earn more. Instead, it taxes every wage earner with strict equality, taking 5.2 percent from each citizen's income (except for government and railway workers) up to the ceiling of $9000 a year. Wages above that aren't taxed.

In theory, social security helps those who need it most in proportion to what they have contributed as wage earners. Someone who has paid taxes on an annual income of $9000 will receive full benefits—more than someone who has paid taxes on a salary of only $4000. But one who earns $50,000 a year pays the same amount in tax and receives the same benefits as one earning $9000. In reality this places a disproportionately heavy burden on the poorest to support a welfare system from which all citizens benefit.

A man with an income of $9000 pays a 5.2 percent tax on each dollar he earns, while a man earning $50,000 pays exactly the same amount, effectively reducing his tax rate to about .9 percent on each dollar earned. To put it another way, no one currently pays more than $468 a year in social security taxes. This may not seem like much to a single man earning $50,000, but represents a big sacrifice to a family of four earning $9000. The law makes no distinction between the two. The system is just as indifferent in the way it may take more money from a poor family for having two wage earners than from a wealthy one with only one wage earner. Because the tax applies to individual salaries rather than to family income, a family with one wage earner making $50,000 now pays less in social security taxes than a family with two wage earners, each making $5000.

Senator Edmund Muskie (D, Me.) and Walter Mondale (D, Minn.) last October introduced a bill that attempts to turn the pyramid bottom side up, so that the heaviest tax rates in the future will fall on the richest families. The bill (S 2656), still pending in the Finance Committee, would bring the social security tax in line with the income tax system. Taxes would be assessed on the basis of family size and income, as determined by the deduction schedule used in computing personal income taxes. Each family would be permitted a deduction of $1000 for basic income and $750 for each dependent. Families earning less than $4000—the official "poverty level"—would pay no social security tax. Above that level, every family would pay a tax of 5.2 percent on the income that remains after deductions are made. The cut-off point on taxable income, now $9000, would be eliminated.

These changes would mean that families of four earning about $13,000 or less would pay less in social security taxes, and those earning more would pay more. Benefits would increase correspondingly, so that those who've contributed more in taxes would receive larger returns at retirement, but those who've earned more than $20,000 a year would receive proportionately smaller returns. The bill places a benefit ceiling at the income level of $20,000; people with larger incomes will all receive the same amount in benefits, the highest then being paid.

Senator Muskie has said the new proposal would not only reduce tax rates for millions of families that now pay for social security from their basic incomes, but would permit the rate to be stabilized at 5.2 percent. This would be accomplished partly by eliminating the more than $6 billion in surplus social security revenue predicted for 1973, and by taxing incomes over $9000.

The Finance Committee proposal for a simple increase in benefits and taxes is part of the larger, disputed welfare bill whose passage this year is in doubt. The more ambitious Muskie-Mondale revisions are, realistically, for another year.

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Two Dozen

Among the pressure groups formed after 1970's Earth Day, Environmental Action is perhaps the most influential still extant. At a news conference on June 7, its director, Sam Love, announced that his researchers have drawn up a new list of the "Dirty Dozen" incumbents in the House who, for the greater good of the environment, should be turned out of office. These 12 were selected not only for their votes on key environment issues, but for their vulnerability in November. After studying tallies on 31 House measures, Environmental Action picked the dozen representatives who it thought 1) were most antipathetic to antipollution, 2) demonstrated "a bad record on general domestic issues," 3) were opposed by a more acceptable candidate and 4) were likely to win or lose by a relatively small number of votes.

Two of them—Reps. Earl Landgrebe and Roger Zion, both Indiana Republicans—have been held over from the original list published in 1970. In addition, this year's list includes Wayne Aspinall (D, Colo.), Walter Baring (D, Nev.), Earle Cabell (D, Tex.), Charles Chamberlain (R, Mich.), James Delaney (D, NY), Samuel Devine (R, Ohio), Sherman Lloyd (R, Utah), Peter Peyser (R, NY), John Rooney (D, NY) and Vernon Thomson (R, Wis.).

The Dirty Dozen are not to be confused with the Deadly Dozen congressmen named by Business Executives Move for Vietnam Peace as deserving defeat in November for their opposition to antiwar legislation; however, three men have the misfortune to appear on both lists (Delaney, Rooney and Aspinall). The peace group says it will contribute $150,000 to the campaigns of challengers of the 12 incumbents (now 11 since George P. Miller was defeated in the California Democratic primary). The list includes Henry P. Smith (R, NY), William S. Mailliard (R, Calif.), Charles Thone (R, Neb.), Manuel Lujan, Jr. (R, NM), Wilmer Mizell (R, NC), Laurence G. Williams (R, Pa.), Joel T. Broyhill (R, Va.) and Alvin E. O'Konski (R, Wis.).

Dumping "Agent Orange"

The air force has a problem. It has over 2.3 million gallons of forest-destroying herbicide—"agent orange"—which it has discontinued using in Vietnam, but it can't dispose of it. Texas and Illinois rejected government plans to incinerate the chemical, and now an oil drilling business is trying to obtain permission from the state of New Mexico to allow the air force to dump its herbicide down an empty two-and-one-half-mile-deep well in Lea County, in southern New Mexico. In a little-noticed announcement on May 3, the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission stated that it would grant the company, the New Mexico Salt Water Disposal Co., of Roswell, a public hearing June 29. The firm wants a variance from water quality regulations that would ban the injection of the chemical into the well. The owner of the company with the air force disposal contract, Charles Lovelace, Jr., has said he would dump the mixture in a one percent solution of salt water, commenting that agent orange is a "standard commercial grade defoliant used in this country everyday," and that the one percent solution would be like "dropping an eyedropper full in the bathtub."

"Agent orange" was used extensively in Vietnam between 1961 and 1970. A fleet of specially outfitted C-123 cargo planes from the 12th Air Commando Squadron operating from Bien Hao air field (the pilots' motto was "Only You Can Prevent Forests") flew over 30,000 missions during a nine-year period. Flying at treetop level, the pilots released an estimated 100 million pounds of herbicides, "treating" 4 million acres. The program was hailed as a success, and supposedly denied the Vietcong hiding places in thick vegetation. Jerry Freidheim, the Defense Department's spokesman, once declared that defoliation was a boon to the Vietnamese lumber industry, because it "permits easier access, so crews can go in and bring out the wood." Equally aided were small farmers, said Freidheim, since the defoliants killed worthless underbrush, giving the farmers "room to grow garden crops right at the edge of the road."

But as early as 1966, the National Cancer Institute reported that agent orange's two, equal components, 2,4-D, and 2,4,5,-T, were both "possibly" teratogenic—which means monster producing. The American Association for the Advancement of Science reported that upwards of 250,000 acres of vital mangrove forest had been destroyed in the defoliation program, and that the heavily sprayed Tay Ninh province had an abnormally high stillborn and birth defect rate. Further evidence disclosed that pregnant mice gave birth to deformed offspring when treated with 2,4,5,-T. Finally, in October, 1969, President Nixon's science adviser, Dr. Lee Dubridge, announced that the Department of Agriculture would ban the further use of 2,4,5,-T in farm use because of the threat to unborn animals. But Nixon, under pressure from the large herbicide manufacturers, among them Dow Chemical, the largest producer of 2,4,5-T, refused to back Dubridge up, and the ban was not enforced. The US Command stopped using agent orange in 1970, apparently convinced that it was harmful to the civilian population, despite the supposed benefits to Vietnamese truck farmers and timber cutters.

New Mexicans have become familiar with the dangers of herbicides through an incredible snafu last July when a Bureau of Reclamation helicopter, spraying

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herbicide on some salt cedar trees sapping the Rio Grande of precious water, also sprayed the cattle herds of two San Acacia ranchers, John Mayo and Lewis Trotter. The cattle began dying, having ingested the herbicide, 2,4,5,-TP, very similar to one of the two component parts of agent orange and a member of the same chemical family of chlorinated hydrocarbons. Both ranchers lost their herds. Two of Mr. Trotter's children became ill from drinking milk from a cow which had grazed in the contaminated pasture. Their illness, sluggishness and backaches, were gone in several weeks, although traces of the herbicide were still appearing in urine samples up to three months after the spraying.

So there is evidence that herbicides present dangers to people and animals, raising questions about the air force's plan to inject its surplus agent orange into a New Mexico well. While the chemical mixture will be dumped to a 13,000-foot level, there is no assurance that some of the solution won't seep upwards into higher levels from which drinking water is drawn. Furthermore, the well casing may have minute cracks or flaws which would allow the escape of some of the mixture while the injection is taking place, allowing for seepage into rock levels closer to the surface.

Finally, agent orange only dissipates into a harmless liquid under certain conditions. According to a January 10, 1970 report in *The New Republic*, authored by a Yale biology professor and two graduate students, agent orange needs "microorganisms requiring specific conditions, including abundant oxygen" to be rendered ineffective. Assuming that the well walls are free of flaws, and the herbicide is trapped as planned in the marine salt water reservoir under the 13,000-foot level, are there sufficient oxygen and microorganisms to neutralize it? *The New Republic* report warned that a high concentration of agent orange might "build up in stagnant water or poorly aerated ground," meaning that the injected herbicide could remain an active, potent, environmental time bomb under the surface of Lee County, New Mexico.

The military rushed into the area of chemical warfare oblivious to the dangers of massive defoliation spraying, and never adopted any plans for the safe disposal of the chemical agents it had invented. So today, 45,000 barrels of agent orange sit on Johnson Island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, waiting for the state of New Mexico to decide whether it will allow it to be injected beneath an important cattle grazing county. Southwestern environmental groups are sure to mobilize against the planned dumping, and it is likely that after June 29, the air force will be looking for another gravesite for one of its most potent Vietnam-war-produced products, which it should never have made and used in the first place.

James Rowen

MR. ROWEN *is editor of* The New Mexico Review.

Arms Control?

"Hedges"

In the euphoria which followed their signing in Moscow, the "Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems" and the "Interim Agreement on Certain Measures with Respect to the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms" were hailed as the beginning of the end of the nuclear arms race. There are now signs that these agreements may have marked the beginning of a new phase of the race.

On June 6, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird was quoted as saying: " 'I could not support the [SALT] agreements if the Congress fails to act on the movement forward of the Trident system, on the B-1 bomber and on the other programs that we have outlined. . . .' " That day, the Pentagon disclosed that it wants to spend $20 million of the funds which will be saved by the limitation on ABMs (no more than two allowed) to begin development of an air-breathing cruise missile for the navy. (With the advent of ballistic missiles, the Pentagon eliminated its Snark cruise missiles because of their vulnerability to conventional Soviet air defenses. Anachronisms, such subsonic missiles were not covered by SALT.)

The Pentagon has fired its opening shot in an invasion of Capitol Hill to fight for its strategic nuclear weapons programs. Unlike the semi-sophisticated numbers game in the 1969 battle over the Safeguard ABM system, the Pentagon's 1972 campaign promises to have only the barest patina of analysis because the numbers are just not there. Take, for instance, intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), which have been frozen by the offensive arms agreement to approximately 2300 for the Soviet Union to 1700 for the United States. The Soviet numerical edge in launchers is surpassed by the American technological lead in delivering nuclear warheads. The USSR has not even *tested* multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs), but the US has been *deploying* them by the thousands on its Poseidon SLBMs and Minuteman III ICBMs. Our present lead in nuclear warheads is greater than two-to-one. If the Soviet Union fails to develop and deploy MIRVs by mid-1977 (when the interim agreement expires), the bloated American warhead arsenal will outnumber the Soviet's by more than four-to-one.

With an increasing advantage in nuclear warheads because of the SALT agreements, the Pentagon does not have the numbers on which to make a plausible case for accelerating its strategic weapons build-up. But that fact will not deter it. In the weeks ahead one will be hearing a covey of Pentagon spokesmen, all invoking the magic word "hedge." The Trident SLBM will be called a "hedge" against a Soviet breakthrough

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in anti-submarine warfare. The B-1 bomber will be rationalized as a "hedge" against a simultaneous failure of the ICBMs and SLBMs of this nation of moonwalkers.

Rather than using the SALT agreements to reverse the momentum of the nuclear arms race, the Nixon administration seems bent on channeling that momentum into directions not explicitly covered by the accords. We've seen it happen before. In 1963 there was an equally euphoric Spirit of Moscow after the signing of the partial nuclear test-ban treaty. In order to placate the joint chiefs of staff and Senate hawks, the Kennedy administration promised to begin—and began—an "aggressive" underground testing program. While that treaty ended Soviet and American atmospheric testing of high-yield nuclear weapons, it may have accelerated the development of the low-yield warheads which made possible the ABM and the MIRVs on the latest generation of US ballistic missiles. Like the Spirit of Camp David before it and the Spirit of Glassboro after it, the Spirit of Moscow 1963 quickly passed into oblivion. Will its 1972 descendant prove equally ephemeral?

Peter J. Ognibene

MR. OGNIBENE, *a 1963 graduate of the Air Force Academy and instructor in political science at the academy from 1968 until his resignation from the air force in 1970, is now a free-lance writer.*

There Are No Votes for Poison

The debate preceding unanimous Senate passage of the toxic substances control bill May 31 showed how many shades of opinion there can be on the same side of an issue as unopposable as environmental protection. In his message of February 8, 1971, President Nixon had called for preventing the dumping into the environment of chemicals—mercury is an example—that endanger public health. Unaware of any danger, industries had long been dropping mercury into lakes and streams. It was thought to sink to the bottom of a waterway and remain there in an inert state causing no harm. Then we learned that waste mercury reacts with aquatic organisms to form methyl mercury, a poison that contaminates fish. The Lake St. Clair, Michigan, mercury scare of 1969 had aroused interest in preventing unwitting contamination of food and water. On June 5 it was reported that toxic levels of mercury had been found in six varieties of edible fish in Long Island, NY, waters. It is now thought by some scientists that the biggest mercury-pollution problem is not industrial waste but the disposal of household items containing mercury that ultimately gets into the water supply. Disinfectants, sponges, thermometers, are among consumer products that contain mercury. The government needs the power to deal with toxic chemicals generally that it already has in the field of pesticides and which the Environmental Protection Agency employed last week in banning most further uses of DDT.

Estimates are that 250,000 new chemical compounds are developed each year, and that of these 300 to 500 are commercially produced. As Mr. Nixon proposed it, a toxic substances bill should require makers of these new compounds to conduct tests intended to detect possibly harmful effects on the environment and on health. There was no provision in the administration bill, however, for routine premarket screening of test results by the Environmental Protection Agency or any other government body. As the legislation was written by the Senate Commerce Committee and as it finally passed, it called for industry testing *and* government review. EPA would have 90 days (or 180 days if it needed an extension) in which to take action against a new compound before commercial production could begin. If EPA did not raise any objection—that is, if it did nothing within the specified time—marketing could proceed. Also under the Senate bill EPA could require that specified existing chemicals be tested where there is reason to believe they might endanger health or the environment. EPA would be given authority it now lacks to restrict use and distribution of toxic chemicals and to seize substances that are considered an imminent hazard. Lead and mercury in paints, phosphates and NTA in detergents, and certain components of plastics, might conceivably be restricted under these new EPA powers.

The chemical industry and environmental groups were, from their different perspectives, dissatisfied with the legislation. Environmentalists recommended that new chemicals be certified individually; that the government specifically approve or reject each new substance for which test results were submitted by a manufacturer. The Manufacturing Chemists Association didn't object to the testing requirement but strenuously opposed government premarket screening. Failing to prevail on that point, the chemical people fought giving EPA the option of extending the screening period in any instance beyond 90 days. William Ruckelshaus, the EPA administrator, sided with industry on both of the controversial provisions of the bill. The Manufacturing Chemists, the industry trade group, sent telegrams opposing the toxic substances bill to every member of Congress, and individual chemical producers, notably Union Carbide, E. I. Du Pont, Stauffer Chemical and Eastman Kodak lobbied heavily against it.

Their position had a champion in Sen. Howard

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Baker (R, Tenn.) who introduced two unsuccessful amendments to eliminate premarket screening and to force EPA into hasty screening of new chemicals so they could be rushed to market. Baker distorted the effects of the bill by asserting that the Environmental Protection Agency would be faced with the impossible job of screening more than two million existing chemical compounds and as many as eight million new ones in the next few years. (Actually, only a few hundred new substances are marketed in any one year and only those would be screened. Of existing chemicals the government would review only those suspected of creating environmental or health problems.) Baker said he supported the purposes of the bill but worried about the onerous effects of the legislation on small chemical companies, the inhibiting of innovation, the stifling of new product development, the delicate balance between public health and private profit.

Baker's likely Democratic opponent in the November election, Rep. Ray Blanton issued a statement May 28 in which he charged that Baker had "allowed special interests to dominate his voting on important consumer legislation. . . . A listing of Baker's cash honorariums as required by the Senate Ethics Committee since 1968 indicates an unusual amount of money being given to Senator Baker by companies and organizations which have tried to defeat or weaken vital consumer bills. . . . Four organizations or companies with direct interest in the toxic substances control act . . . have donated a total of $4000 to Baker." Blanton listed "honorariums coming from the Bimberg Corporation of New York, $1000; National Fiber Box Association of Chicago, $1000; the E. I. Du Pont de Nemours Co. of Wilmington, Delaware, $500 and the Synthetic Chemical Manufacturers Association of Scarsdale, NY, $1500." Blanton's press assistant said also that Eastman Kodak's plant in Kingsport, Tennessee, a constituent of Sen. Baker, is a "huge employer and one of the largest plants in East Tennessee." Blanton hoped to make political hay, but Baker refused comment and only three papers in Tennessee reported the story. Baker—his amendments having failed—voted *for* the hazardous substances bill.

The bill is pending business in the House and it's likely to pass there too. It will then become part of the arsenal of consumer weapons, which includes certain protections in the areas of pesticides, food and drugs, water pollution, radio active materials, and the transportation of hazardous chemicals. Commerce Committee Chairman Senator Warren Magnuson, who with Sen. William B. Spong, Jr. of Virginia was a principal backer of the legislation, is concerned that the government now has no "power to control the manufacture, use and distribution of new chemical substances which may harm the environment." But, industry, if the law is enacted, will have to start thinking about the public consequences of the use of chemicals. The Senate vote indicated it was unanimous about that.

David Sanford

Higher Education Bill

Universal BA?

by Gerald Grant

All the talk about the PhD glut and declining birthrates has obscured the fact that higher education will expand at an enormous rate in the '70s. Latest projections of the US Office of Education and the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education estimate that enrollment in our colleges and universities will rise from 8.5 million in 1970 to 13.2 million in 1980, a 55 percent increase. There will be a leveling off after 1980, but another upswing in the nineties. So a lot more money will be needed for education, by students and the institutions they attend.

The $18.5 billion Higher Education Bill approved by Congress June 8 began as an effort to relieve the financial crisis brought on in part by these enrollment pressures. But it emerged from the House-Senate Conference in a form that is likely to increase the pressures. The bill recasts our whole system of federal aid for students by creating a major new program of

GERALD GRANT, *now a research fellow in sociology at Harvard, has been appointed associate professor of education at Syracuse University.*

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Basic Educational Opportunity Grants (BOGs). BOG grants will be made directly to students on application to the federal government, whereas previously most federal aid reached needy students via the colleges and their financial aid officers. In some ways, it is like a new, larger GI Bill. Under BOGs, every student whose family can't be expected to help meet his college costs will be entitled, "not as a privilege, but as a right," to a grant of $1400 a year. Only students whose families are below the poverty line qualify for the full basic grant. Others will get aid on a sliding formula of $1400 minus an expected parental contribution. Precise guidelines are not laid out in the legislation, but they are expected to parallel the formulations of the College Scholarship Service, long used to determine levels of student financial need. Under those guidelines, a student from a family with two children that earns more than $11,000 a year, will probably not qualify for any part of the basic grant. The guidelines are to be worked out by the Commissioner of Education, but the Congress reserved to itself the right to react to those guidelines within 60 days, and it is likely that pressures will develop in an election year to broaden the eligibility to include the suburban family with three children, that earns $14,000 a year.

If it is fully funded the legislation will give low-income students the same purchasing power as those from a family with a $12,000-a-year income. (If one looks at the college-eligible population, aged 18-24, one finds that only 20 percent of those from families earning less than $7500 a year are now enrolled in some form of higher education—compared with 41 percent from families earning $12,000, and 56 percent from those earning $15,000.) If low-income students go to college at the same rate as students from $12,000-a-year families do today, it would push their enrollment rate from 20 to 40 percent. The legislation could hasten the historic transition from mass to nearly universal higher education, and thus may intensify pressures on institutions of higher learning.

The omnibus bill also beefs up a number of supplemental aid benefits. For example (and again, if the bill is fully funded), a poor student who wants to go to Antioch College, where costs are $4500 a year, could qualify for a $1400 basic grant, $1500 via a supplementary grant channeled through the college, $1000 or more on a work-study grant, and up to $1250 a year on a federally subsidized loan.

There are several unusual incentive features, including a stipulation that a student may not receive more than half the actual annual cost of college attendance under the basic grant. That means a student attending a two-year community college where total costs are $1000 a year, could not receive more than $500. But if he's at a four-year university where costs exceed $2800 a year, he can pick up the full $1400.

The legislation makes a major breakthrough in its lump-sum payments for both private and public colleges, which they may use in any way they want. This contrasts with previous forms of institutional aid (also extended in the omnibus bill), which targeted funds for specific purposes such as research, dormitory construction, or vocational training. These lump-sum operating payments are tied to formulas based primarily on the number of students in the college who qualify for the BOGs program and other federal grants or loans. Thus one of the major effects of the bill will be to up the incentive for colleges to enroll low-income and working-class students.

The crucial debate in the House-Senate conference, which ran until 5:15 a.m. in its final session, came on two different formulas for these lump-sum payments, one outlined by Sen. Claiborne Pell (D, RI), the other by Rep. Edith Green (D, Ore.). Mrs. Green wanted to base most of the federal aid to institutions on *existing* student enrollments, regardless of family income. The conferees tended to follow Pell and authorized up to a billion dollars a year in institutional aid to be distributed as follows:

- 45 percent on the basis of the number of BOGs students enrolled in the institution, at a rate of $500 for each basic grant student in small colleges, to an average of about $250 per student in large institutions.
- 45 percent on the basis of other federally aided students who are receiving supplementary grants, work-study funds, or loans.
- 10 percent distributed to universities at the rate of $200 a year for each graduate student enrolled.

After her plan lost in conference, Mrs. Green announced her opposition to the bill and urged the higher education association to lobby against it. Although reluctant to desert Mrs. Green after testifying for her bill, and troubled by the anti-busing rider that occasioned most of the debate in the House, the association decided that the institutional aid provisions were the best that they were likely to get. To vote a one-year continuance of the old programs and begin again next year on a new omnibus bill, as she suggested, might mean delaying any start on institutional aid for three or four more years. The anti-busing rider, which provides that court-ordered busing or transfer of students to achieve racial balance be banned until appeals have been completed or until January 1, 1974, was the principal item of controversy, endangering passage and obscuring discussion of the major elements of the legislation detailed here. A liberal minority in the House (led by Reps. Don Edwards, Badillo, Conyers and Mitchell) favored the higher education programs but nevertheless could not stomach voting for what they saw as repeal of Fourteenth Amendment guarantees of equal educational opportunity.

There's an ingenious triggering mechanism in the bill that will encourage colleges and universities to lobby for more student aid, so they can qualify for

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their lump-sum general aid payments. Generally, the budget committees in Congress have been appropriating only a third to half the amount authorized for student aid. Under an earlier program limiting aid to students under the poverty line, only two-fifths of an eligible 516,000 students from families with incomes below $6000 received grants last year. Under the new legislation, the institutions will not qualify for all their aid unless the basic student grants are funded at a minimum of half the authorized levels. And the basic grants will not be funded unless the old loan and work-study programs are pushed to more generous levels. This creates a new kind of domino theory of overlapping constituencies, each pushing the other so all get more.

Joining institutional aid to numbers of federally aided students—as compared with the straight enrollment formula favored by Mrs. Green—means that small private colleges serving less affluent students and two-year public colleges will be somewhat favored. The public junior colleges will benefit, because these colleges enroll the greatest percentage of poor students, and they in turn will receive the BOGs grants that determine the institution's share under that section. The private colleges will benefit on the second 45 percent allocation, because they have large numbers of students on federal loans in order to meet higher tuition costs. Thus, Hamilton College in upstate New York could receive $138,000 (or an average of $140 per student) under the new legislation, while an urban Catholic college nearby, serving many commuter students, could get $341,000 (about $200 per student) a year. As a nationwide average, the payments will increase operating budgets by only five or six percent, but would affect some institutions more than others. For instance, some black colleges in the South would have an operating budget increase of 14 percent. New York University, which recently outlined drastic faculty cutbacks to meet budget deficits running $10 million to $15 million a year, would be helped, but not saved, by an estimated federal payment of $3 million a year. All these estimates are based on the unlikely assumption that full authorizations will be funded by Congress.

On the whole the private institutions will do well. Although they enroll only 27 percent of all students, they will get 37 percent of the funds. The bill also contains a federal incentive to state scholarship programs aiding private colleges and universities. Such funds can double by 1975 from their current base of $270 million a year.

While 90 percent of the institutional aid money is determined by the number of federally assisted students in a school, there is no requirement that the money be spent on special facilities or programs for those students. And no one seems eager to face the question of what colleges can do for great numbers of marginally prepared students. I have recently visited more than half a dozen colleges where faculty who have been most insistent on admitting large numbers of disadvantaged students are having sober second thoughts about the outcome. Many have concluded they are not equipped to provide the basic skills and high school level literacy that so many of these students need.

Nor does the bill go far enough in favor of an institution like the College for Human Services in New York, which has had remarkable success in providing professional and paraprofessional training for black and Puerto Rican adults, most of whom never finished high school. Good programs like this one are often small and costly. The bill also may not greatly help colleges which lose money on each student they admit because of higher costs. Instead, the bill may tempt some colleges and universities that over-expanded in the research boom of the 1960s to recruit more marginal students and put them in cut-rate programs.

The bill likewise raises a serious question of public policy in that it ties most benefits for the 18-24 year-olds to their presence in formal institutions of learning. Though the legislation will permit students to use their grants to attend business schools and other proprietary training institutes, all but a small proportion will doubtless enter a college and university system which operates on a rather narrow set of academic values. Even in the community colleges which give technical and vocational training, the academic values and reward structures tend to predominate, and faculty at these institutions generally measure their success by the number of students they send on to full-fledged four-year colleges. It takes courage for a student to insist on learning a trade in many of these schools or to resist the least serious among the counter-cultural faculty who offer a comfortable life to the student (no grades, few demands) in exchange for a soft life for themselves. In other cases marginally prepared students have been wooed by shallow Marxists who see their mission as consciousness-raising among the new student proletariat. In either case the outcome for the student is more likely to be an increase in scorn than in skill. But why must everyone go to college? Why not give a student a grant that he could use to apprentice himself to a pottery-maker in North Carolina? If by enrolling in college, a student could qualify for more than $10,000 worth of outright federal grants, why not a $10,00 grant to set himself up in the masonry business or to open a bookstore?

Most private scholarship aid has in the past been doled out to middle-income students. The bill provides money for classroom construction, extension of the Teacher Corps, establishment of a National Institute of Education (we could use more intelligent coordination in dissemination of research results), and authorizes $2 billion to help desegregating school districts, including the construction of educational parks. But

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the central importance of the bill is that it establishes a whole new framework for the financing of higher education. How far beyond the bill can we go before we create a pattern of financial inducements that makes higher education a funnel through which nearly all youth must pass?

We ought to ask what the consequences of an over-credentialed society might be, and whether we want a system that too infrequently identifies real skills and talents and too often labels as failures those who don't have some kind of credential. We need this legislation, but the next step ought to be a wider range of post-high school opportunities, lessening the pressures for a bachelor's degree as a passport to success.

Secretary Morton's Mistake

Which Pipeline?

by Barbara Hobbie and Richard B. Mancke

In mid-May, Interior Secretary Rogers B. Morton announced that he would approve construction of a trans-Alaskan oil pipeline; it was a long time coming and the issue is far from settled yet. An injunction obtained from the District Court in Washington, DC, by environmentalists has delayed construction of the line for two years. They argue that a Canadian route is preferable because it is environmentally less hazardous and because it is expected that a Canadian pipeline will be constructed in any event. Thus, the additional disruption from an Alaskan pipeline appears unnecessary. The district court should announce its decision this summer. Regardless of the outcome, an appeal is certain. The Supreme Court will render the final verdict.

The beginnings of the controversy reach back four-and-a-half years, when Atlantic Richfield and Humble Oil, in a joint exploratory venture in the Prudhoe Bay area of North Slope Alaska, unearthed the largest known oil reserves in North America—9.6 billion barrels worth. Each Prudhoe Bay well promises to yield roughly 10,000 barrels per day in contrast to the 30 barrels per day produced by the average US well. Moreover, Prudhoe Bay oil will cost less than 40 cents a barrel to produce; large quantities of comparable quality oil are currently produced in the rest of the US at about $3 a barrel. Enormous profits will be realized if this oil can be cheaply transported to US markets.

The owners of the Prudhoe Bay field concluded that the cheapest way to deliver the oil would be to pipe it across the 900 miles of rugged terrain between the North Slope and Valdez (an ice-free port on the Alaskan Gulf). At Valdez, it would be transferred to large tankers destined for the West Coast. The planned pipeline capacity was 2 million barrels a day; producers expected to start delivering their oil this year.

To date, no oil has come out of the North Slope. The environmentalists' injunction prevented the Department of Interior from issuing the necessary construction permit until it had (1) evaluated the adverse environmental effects attributable to the pipeline and (2) examined the environmental impact of alternative means of supplying consumers with similar quantities of energy. In response to a court order, Interior early last March did issue an environmental impact statement. According to Secretary Morton, the report did not show that a Canadian route was preferable.

Two of the environmentalists' objections to the Alaskan pipeline arise from fears that wildlife life-cycle and migration patterns will be disrupted and that hot oil flowing through the line will melt the permafrost and cause flooding. Extensive and costly engineering modifications of the pipeline have reduced sharply the likely incidence of both occurrences. Another fear has not been allayed: oil spills. Earthquakes could rupture the pipeline or tanker accidents could occur on the second leg of the route. This fear is warranted. The Alaskan pipeline will traverse major earthquake zones, and Torrey Canyon and similar disasters have shown the consequences of tanker mishaps. Environmentalists assert there is an alternative delivery system—a trans-Canadian pipeline terminating in the

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RICHARD MANCKE *is an assistant professor of economics at the University of Michigan and former staff economist for President Nixon's Cabinet Task Force on Oil Import Controls.* BARBARA HOBBIE *is a free-lance writer.*

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US Midwest—that neither traverses earthquake zones nor requires transfers from pipeline to tankers. Hence, this is the delivery system they prefer. A member of Canada's parliament told the Joint Economic Committee of Congress June 9 that Sec. Morton had shown no interest in seeing the results of Canadian studies, now in progress, examining the costs and environmental effects of the alternate pipeline route through Canada. The studies, which have cost $43 million, will be available later this year.

In its study of the environmental impact of the Alaskan pipeline, Interior upheld the environmentalists' contention that large spills would be less likely if Prudhoe Bay's oil were shipped through a Canadian pipeline. Taken alone, this finding seemed to suggest that Secretary Morton would (or should) refuse to issue a permit for construction of the Alaskan pipeline. But there were other considerations that led him to do otherwise, among them the elusive "national security" argument.

In order to satisfy its petroleum thirst, the United States requires enormous amounts of crude oil, currently about 5 billion barrels a year or 14 million barrels a day. The Interior Department projects a 4.6 percent annual increase in these requirements.

The Alaskan pipeline could be in operation in 1976, the Canadian pipeline not until 1978 or '80. Proponents of the Alaskan line argue that during this two- to four-year period, the US will be forced to import more foreign oil, resulting in higher costs and reduced national security. Specifically, the US would be forced to rely more heavily on oil imported primarily from Arab nations, which are the dominant members of OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries). OPEC oil is not only more costly than Alaskan oil, it also carries a higher political risk.

The actual costs of delaying Alaskan oil are far from certain. Interior's estimates range from $1.1 billion to $1.25 billion for each year's delay. Charles Cicchetti of Resources for the Future believes these estimates are far too high, because they fail to fully take account of the fact that Alaskan crude oil will command a higher price in the Midwest than in other parts of the country. On the basis of his detailed studies, Cicchetti concludes that costs will actually be less if a Canadian route is chosen. In sum, there is no overpowering cost argument on the side of the Alaskan pipeline. But what of national security?

The security argument in favor of the Alaskan route was advanced by General George Lincoln, director of the President's Office of Emergency Preparedness. "From a national security point of view," the general wrote Secretary Morton, "it is important to get North Slope oil to our lower 48 states as soon as possible so as to lessen our dependence on potentially insecure foreign sources of petroleum."

In the past, arguments analogous to Lincoln's have provided the principal rationalization for federal intervention in the crude oil industry. To illustrate, in 1959 US consumption of imported oil was growing swiftly. Arguing that this flow might be cut off because of either political turmoil in oil exporting countries or foreign military intervention, President Eisenhower maintained that a substantial cutoff would lead to a sharp drop in the output of the energy-dependent US economy. To minimize this possibility, he imposed mandatory oil import quotas, the effect of which was to increase consumers' dependence on domestic oil and at the same time lock the US into a less competitive pricing system. President Nixon's cabinet-level task force estimated that this added oil security cost the American public about $4.8 billion in 1969.

Because one consequence of the adoption of a Canadian route would be a greater dependence on imported oil between 1976 and 1980, we need to evaluate the national security "cost" if the US does not reduce its dependence on foreign oil during this period. The magnitude of this cost depends on the availability of alternative oil resources. What are they?

Oil shipped via the Alaskan pipeline will be sold on the West Coast. In recent years, the West Coast's demand for oil has grown at an annual rate of 2.5 percent. (In contrast, demand for oil in the rest of the nation has grown at an annual rate of 5 percent.) Assuming that this rate of growth continues throughout the 1970s, West Coast demand would range from 2.4 million barrels a day in 1976 to 2.7 million barrels a day in 1980. If (1) there were no shipments of North Slope oil between 1976 and 1980, because the government denied permission for the construction of the Alaskan pipeline, and (2) no non-Canadian foreign oil was shipped to the US because of an international crisis, there would still be at least six sources capable of supplying crude oil to the West Coast.

The Interior Department's environmental impact statement suggests four likely sources. The West Coast will be producing about 1,158,000 barrels per day; 400,000 barrels per day could be imported from Canada; at least 350,000 barrels per day could be supplied by withdrawing oil from the Naval Petroleum Reservation at Elk Hills, California; and at least 37,000 barrels per day could be imported from the adjacent oil-surplus Rocky Mountain states. In addition, two other emergency sources are suggested in the President's recent study on oil import quotas: crude oil production could be expanded to fully utilize all immediately available spare capacity (estimated to be 5 percent of production), and existing inventories could be consumed.

The difference between total demand and the total supply from secure sources measures the oil deficit which the West Coast would suffer in the unlikely event that all non-Canadian shipments of foreign oil were interrupted. This deficit is small, ranging from only 80,000 barrels per day in 1976 to 298,000 barrels

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per day in 1980. Possible ways of meeting this deficit include: storing additional emergency crude oil reserves, installing new production capacity for faster production of existing West Coast reserves including Elk Hills (some knowledgeable government officials believe that, in an emergency, Elk Hills may be able to supply more than 500,000 barrels a day), and forcing a small reduction in the West Coast's crude oil demand. The foregoing analysis of government figures demonstrates that, even in the absence of any shipments of Alaskan oil, the West Coast would not be greatly endangered if foreign oil shipments ceased during any year between 1976 and 1980. That fact, coupled with the fact that a complete shut-down of foreign oil trade is unlikely, suggests that the early delivery of oil does not justify the Alaskan pipeline.

Is the national security argument a false alarm? No. The nation's industrial and private sectors do rely heavily on petroleum energy, and until cheaper kinds of energy can be successfully tapped, we will remain dependent on oil. But when compared to the Alaskan pipeline, the Canadian pipeline offers tangible national security benefits.

In his letter to Secretary Morton, General Lincoln mentions only two ways in which a trans-Canadian pipeline would offer more security than the proposed pipeline across Alaska: First, pipeline shipments across Canada are less likely to fall victim to interdictions by a hostile foreign power than are open-water shipments from Valdez. Secondly, natural disasters are less likely to interrupt the flow of North Slope oil if it is piped across Canada. Lincoln's cursory analysis failed, however, to recognize the most valuable security benefits of the Canadian route.

One fact must impress even the casual reader of the reams of supporting analysis for Interior's statement: even with the delivery of 2 million barrels a day of North Slope oil in 1980, imports of non-Canadian crude oil will comprise a sizable and growing fraction of US crude oil consumption. For example, Interior estimates that our imports will total about 8.5 million barrels a day in 1980. Moreover, if Interior is correct in its belief that total output in the lower 48 states cannot be raised above its 1980 level and that overall US oil demand will grow annually by 4.6 percent, then our dependence on non-Canadian foreign oil would be more than 1 million barrels a day higher in 1981 and more than 5½ million barrels a day higher by 1985. This means that even if the North Slope supplies the lower 48 states with 2 million barrels a day of crude oil, our oil security will continue to deteriorate unless more than 1 million barrels a day of additional "secure" oil is developed annually during the early 1980s. The three most likely sources of additional "secure" oil today are the Alaskan North Slope, the Canadian Northwest (including the Arctic Islands), and the Alaskan Gulf. Under Secretary of Interior William Pecora stated that the crude oil potential of the Alaskan North Slope is 140 billion barrels and the potential of the Gulf of Alaska is 40 billion barrels. Some idea of the magnitude of these estimated reserves can be inferred by comparing them with the 9.6 billion barrels of proved reserves at Prudhoe Bay.

These figures make it obvious that a coordinated development of these three major oil sources is necessary. There are two reasons why the choice of a Canadian pipeline for shipping Alaskan oil will promote this goal, whereas the choice of the Alaskan route would work against it.

Reason one: The West Coast is the logical destination for both North Slope crude oil shipped via the Alaskan pipeline and for crude oil produced in the Alaskan Gulf. Transshipment of any of this oil to the rest of the United States would be extremely costly. In addition, even with no foreign oil imports, the West Coast will only demand slightly more than 1 million barrels a day of Alaskan oil in the early 1980s. These facts have prompted Interior to admit that substantial Gulf of Alaska production would cause "an inconvenient surplus" on the West Coast "if North Slope oil were to go there." The implications of this are apparent: the expectation that the Alaskan pipeline would be constructed has sharply reduced incentives for oil companies to develop crude oil reserves in the Alaskan Gulf. On the other hand, a Canadian pipeline would deliver Prudhoe Bay oil to the US Midwest rather than to the West Coast; in turn, this would spur development of Alaskan Gulf oil because this oil would be needed to meet the West Coast's demand.

Reason two: Interior estimates that if Prudhoe Bay oil is shipped via an Alaskan pipeline to the West Coast, daily imports of non-Canadian crude oil into the rest of the United States will total about 8.5 million barrels in 1980. This region's dependence on "insecure" oil will grow even larger in subsequent years. Currently, the Alaskan North Slope and the Canadian North are the two most promising sources for the additional large quantities of secure oil necessary to supply this oil-short region. US energy policy-makers should vigorously encourage production from both sources. However, because a Canadian pipeline must first be built before oil from either of these sources can be shipped to the Midwest, and because the US government has not promoted construction of this pipeline, current energy policy has actually had an adverse effect on the development of crude oil reserves in this region. This state of affairs would change dramatically if the US backed a Canadian alternative for delivering Prudhoe Bay oil.

The case against the Alaskan pipeline is a strong one. The sole security benefit of the proposed Alaskan line is early delivery, whereas the Canadian line represents not only a more prudent approach to environmental problems but a long-term approach to meeting vital national energy needs.

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Fears of the New Democratic Coalition

Southern Strategy

by Paul R. Wieck

Roanoke, Va.

The man who unified Virginia's "liberal" Democrats wasn't a delegate himself. But from the moment Lt. Gov. Henry E. Howell drew a rousing ovation from the state convention as he bowed and waved from the balcony, it was clear his presence would hold together labor men and women wearing Humphrey stickers, young volunteers who came into the party in droves for McGovern, the hundreds of blacks from every corner of the state and the more traditional liberals from northern Virginia. To a majority of the 2600 delegates, the real priority in 1972 was to make their party over so Howell can shed his "independent" label and run for governor as a Democrat in 1973 if he chooses.

From this unity, benefits flowed to everyone. Labor's men left with their friends in complete control of the party organization after decades as outsiders. Blacks placed two of their finest women in top party posts and many others on the delegation. The McGovern forces, in control of the two northern Virginia districts but with power in several others, went home with a majority of the state's 53 delegates to Miami.

For over three decades, Virginia was ruled by a tightly knit oligarchy based in rural courthouses and presided over by the late Sen. Harry F. Byrd, Sr. At Roanoke, the last vestiges of that organization were cleaned out by an urban-based coalition shaped by Howell's personal kind of "populism," the gradual shift of population to an urban corridor running from the Washington suburbs through Fredericksburg and Richmond (the Richmond suburbs remain a conservative bastion) to the heavily populated Hampton Roads area (Norfolk, Newport News) and, finally, the impact of the new party guidelines, which banned the unit rule (in the past, a favorite device to keep the rural bloc solid) and which required fair representation of youth, women and blacks.

Tennessee Democrats met the same weekend in Nashville, free of the heavy hand of the patronage-fed organization of the late Buford Ellington, an LBJ buddy, but without the unifying force of a Howell. Nevertheless, a good many McGovern delegates were named. North Carolina was having the same experience at district conventions. Here the liberals were pulled together by Terry Sanford.

Added to the probability of a McGovern nomination at Miami Beach, these developments have caused hand-wringing in moderate and conservative circles in Virginia and elsewhere in the South. Disaster is predicted of a magnitude that could cost the Democrats enough Senate and House seats across the South to give the GOP control of Congress for the first time in 20 years. Typical was the dire prediction at the Roanoke convention of Virginia's moderate attorney general, Andrew Miller, who has ties to the Sanford camp. A McGovern nomination, on the heels of the liberal takeover of his state party, he says, will mean a Nixon margin of 500,000 to 750,000 votes in Virginia, enough to pull Sen. William Spong (D) down and at least maintain the 6-4 margin the Virginia GOP now has in the House delegation. The same fate is predicted in similar circumstances for Sen. David Gambrell (D) of Georgia, who will face Rep. Fletcher Thompson (R) in the general election if he survives the primary; for Rep. Galifianakis (D), who unseated Sen. B. Everett Jordan (D) of North Carolina in the primary and now faces a popular, right-wing Raleigh TV announcer in the general election; for Alabama's Sen. John J. Sparkman (D), who is opposed by former Postmaster General Winton Blount; and for J. Bennett Johnston if he defeats Sen. Allen J. Ellender (D) in Louisiana. That's five seats, enough to turn a 55-45 Democratic margin into a 51-49 deficit, if Sen. Harry F. Byrd, Jr. should then defect to the GOP. The combination of a McGovern nomination and a changing party structure in the South is also said to rule out any chance of ending the careers of Senators J. Strom Thurmond, (R, SC), John Tower, (R, Tex.) and Howard Baker (R, Tenn.).

How valid are these fears? And, if valid, what are the realistic alternatives?

Several things are evident. First of all, the GOP has been picking up seats in the South, both Senate and House, for a decade or more, and the new liberal coalitions haven't been in control during this period. In addition to six of 10 in Virginia, the Republicans already have four of 11 House seats in North Carolina, four of nine in Tennessee, three of eight in Alabama, two of 10 in Georgia, three of 23 in Texas, one of four in Arkansas, three of 12 in Florida, one of six in South Carolina: in all, 27 of the 109 representatives from the 11 states of the Old Confederacy plus six of 22 senators.

While the GOP was making these steady inroads,

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the same Democrats who are now wringing their hands were in control of the party across the South, helpless to halt the decline in their fortunes or to prevent the evolution of a new kind of southern voter—one free of party loyalties that bound their granddaddies—an independent voter influenced in turn by the rising commercialism of that area, the deep fundamentalist faith of the region and the torturous racial stresses of the last decade.

Nor did the rise of "stylistic populism" as practiced by some of the younger governors in the forefront of the "stop McGovern" movement stem the tide. In 1972, the South is Wallace country—adamantly opposed to busing, troubled by the failure of our institutions to curb what they consider "leftist" influences, often incensed by the charge our involvement in Vietnam is "immoral" although anxious to bring the war to an end. Almost anyone makes a good target—the "pointy headed" bureaucrats, as Wallace chooses to call them; the welfare recipients whose mere existence violates the work ethic of a rising commercial class; the untaxed rich and their foundations. In the midst of change itself, the South appears to be looking for a new kind of leadership.

Nixon is acknowledged to be strong today. But particularly in the mid-South, McGovern isn't regarded as hopeless by the new leaders, "if" he takes a moderate southerner as his running mate, "if" he doesn't write off the area in the general election, "if" the Wallace forces leave Miami Beach feeling they were treated fairly and had some impact on the party's platform. A lot of "ifs" for an area which, at best, could be turned into a marginal battleground "if" everything went just right.

Why, with all this happening, can Lt. Governor Howell play the role of the unifier in Virginia? The answer is that Howell over a dozen years in public office developed issues that spanned race and class barriers, that caused Wallace whites and the blacks to vote together because his programs would help them and they didn't care if some of it rubbed off on the other guy. He felt free to toss aside the party label when it appeared he would be shut out by the party bosses. He fought the "big boys" in the utility and insurance companies, something of importance to a wage-earner who can barely pay his mortgage, let alone cope with rising utility and insurance rates. At the same time, Howell took the "one man, one vote" case to the courts and won. He befriended blacks and organized labor. His style was often too abrasive for educated suburban liberals who want both style and content (this may have cost him the governorship in 1969) but it helped him build his following. The McGovern forces understood this, realized the delegates at Roanoke would reflect it and, in much of the state, piggy-backed the Howell coalition.

Can a Howell-type coalition be built in the South and elsewhere in the country for a presidential ticket? To put it another way, can McGovern and Mills agree on tax and welfare reform proposals with which Wallace can live? Can the South with its strong streak of "patriotism" be convinced a lot of money is being wasted on defense spending? Is it possible McGovern can convince enough southern voters he's for the kind of change they can abide? It won't be easy.

Of course, the successes of the new coalition aren't limited to Virginia. Galifianakis' win in North Carolina was credited to a new alignment of blacks, young people and urban residents and, in Texas, State Rep. Frances T. (Sissy) Farenthold polled 46 percent of the vote in a runoff after a brief (four months) campaign by rolling up huge margins in some urban areas (over 60,000 in Houston) with strong support from young people, women and blacks. But there are danger signals. Farenthold lost her race in the rural counties, once the stronghold of liberal candidates in Texas, largely because she had too limited time for them. Howell is concerned with the rural and small-town vote in Virginia because he realizes the urban areas won't turn in big enough majorities to overcome landslide defeats in the boondocks. McGovern's national managers should take note. There are few states in this country in which liberals can win with the majorities they get in the inner city, given an even or better break in the suburbs.

There is some resentment among older liberals in the northern Virginia delegations over the tactics of McGovern's zealous young followers. It was accentuated in the 10th district when the McGovern camp insisted on taking all five delegates after, so it was claimed, benefiting by proportional representation in some precinct caucuses. A youthful Muskie backer was still stunned the next day. "I just can't believe what happened." He blamed it on the "McGovern crazies."

The Virginia convention offered a poignant example of who's being left behind as new issues come to the fore, as minorities get more attention, and as the selection processes open up. Historically the "fighting ninth" in southwest Virginia's coal-mining country has been loyal to the national party and an intra-party foe of the Byrd machine. By 1972, the delegates from the ninth had been left behind and gave the moderate-conservative slate its only overwhelming margin in the convention voting. After their slate lost, they went home en masse before the convention adjourned. Yet, only six years ago, the ninth gave anti-Byrd candidates strong majorities in the first primary in which a Byrd organization candidate went down to defeat. It's something McGovern himself understands. He won his seat in 1962 by polling a two-to-one majority in the farm areas, losing the small towns two-to-one and breaking even in the cities. Without these votes in 1972, it's doubtful if any national ticket put up by the Democrats can win.

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Is His Arithmetic Correct?

McGovern's Economics

by Melville J. Ulmer

Senator McGovern has been called a prairie populist, a radical, a far-left liberal, an extremist, a radical-conservative—all of them labels lacking the precision of the periodic table. Nevertheless, a good case can be made for tagging McGovern with the last of these—radical-conservative—and indeed he has been so classified by one of his economic advisers, Professor James Tobin of Yale, a man of indisputable professional competence.

With McGovern's objectives, I find no fault. Yet it must be said that the South Dakota senator has demonstrated, especially in his debate with Hubert Humphrey, that he is a bit shaky in his economics. He has been forced to backpedal, contradict himself, and even acknowledge uncertainty or ignorance on some points. I attribute this to the hypothesis that he has too uncritically accepted from his prestigious Yale, Harvard and MIT advisers a platform he only imperfectly understands.

A radical-conservative is one who believes that economic decision-making should be left more or less entirely to "free" private enterprise, and that everything possible must be done, including measures some consider extreme, to set the stage so that this process can work effectively. Vigorous trust-busting and a firm use of the tax schedule to provide equity and stability are high on the list of the necessary measures. So is the elimination of government interference or "meddling" in welfare, business regulation, price control, foreign trade, and above all, production. Whether McGovern believes in all facets of this philosophy is a moot question; nonetheless it is the approach to which he has attached his name and, for the time being, his political destiny. In outline, his program includes:

1) *Sharing the Wealth.* Here, the spirit of radical-conservatism is illustrated in the Tobin-McGovern attitude toward welfare. The objective is to get government out of the social security and welfare business, banishing in one fell swoop an entire bureaucracy of social workers and their supporting cast of clerks, stenographers, administrators and statisticians. To accomplish this, an objective formula for dispensing public funds has to be adopted, one that will operate automatically. And since this approach also requires doing away with the "means test," special provisions must be made for preserving, among those eligible for financial assistance, the incentive for work. The classical device is some form of negative income tax.

Professor Tobin's version, which McGovern has tentatively espoused, would give $1000 to every man, woman and child in the country. This basic subsidy would be taxed away, but only bit by bit as earnings rose, so that it would pay lower-income people to take jobs if they can get them. Thus, a family of four with no earnings would receive the full basic subsidy of $4000. A family with $3000 in earnings would have one-third of that amount, or $1000, deducted from its subsidy; its total income, therefore, would be $6000—$3000 in earnings and $3000 in subsidy or "negative taxes." A family with $6000 in earnings would lose $2000 of its subsidy and get a total income of $8000. Following this pattern, subsidies in some amount or other would continue for all families up to those earning $12,000, the "breakeven" point, at which the 33⅓ percent "internal" tax on earnings would succeed in wiping out the basic subsidy entirely. Families with earnings above $12,000 would be subject to the regular *positive* income tax, plus a whopping extra tax necessary to finance the subsidies.

The arithmetic of this redistributional scheme, judged by McGovern's reaction in interviews, has been a source of some embarrassment to him. So much so, apparently, that a meeting of McGovern's advisers was called to go over the figures and possibly alter some details so as to reduce its total cost. The necessary increase in taxes in the original plan, for families earning more than $12,000, has been estimated at widely different amounts by Senator Humphrey, by the Senate Finance Committee, by independent authorities, and by McGovern. In a recent interview with *Business Week*, McGovern acknowledged a net cost of $43 billion, which though huge by any standard, is well below estimates offered by others. The bulk of this burden, whatever its exact dimensions, would fall on those making from $12,000 to $50,000 a year—the middle class that now pays three-fourths of the nation's total taxes and whose "revolt" has drawn honeyed words from every presidential candidate from Wallace to Nixon and McGovern himself.

Because strict reliance is placed on a mathematically fixed scale of allowances requiring no means test, only $14 billion out of the total $43 billion bonus would go to families officially classified as in poverty, that is those with incomes below $4000. Those between poverty and $12,000 would receive the remaining $29 billion. In short, for every three dollars provided in

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negative income taxes, and paid for by the positive taxes of others, less than one dollar would get to those in poverty.

Nor are the weaknesses of the plan easily corrected. For example, the basic $1000 subsidy could be lowered, cutting the cost, but this would violate the senator's objective of providing a family of four with a minimum income of $4000. The "internal tax rate"—that is the deduction made from the subsidy as earnings rise—could be increased, and this would reduce costs by lowering the breakeven point. But it would also diminish the incentive to work. (Will a lower-income worker take a job, with its extra costs of transportation, clothes and the like, if he is allowed to keep only 30 to 40 cents out of every dollar earned?) In favor of the negative income tax plan is primarily its intent: to obtain a moderately more equitable distribution of income than now prevails. Fortunately, other measures are available for achieving this objective, including federalization—along with generous extension and liberalization—of existing welfare provisions.

2) *Tax Reform.* The reader will notice, I hope, that the $43 billion tax increase contemplated would provide no additional revenue for the Treasury, since receipts from taxpayers would be exactly balanced by outlays to negative income-tax receivers. The same kind of balance, leaving zero return for the Treasury, would hold for any revised form of the plan. Hence, an especially heavy burden is placed on McGovern's proposal for tax reform, for it is through this that he must expect to meet the rising costs of ongoing government programs as well as any new projects. In toto, according to his estimates, the McGovern tax reforms would raise $28 billion in new funds through placing a minimum tax on higher incomes, regardless of source; eliminating the special depreciation allowances and the investment tax credit on corporation incomes awarded to business by the Nixon administration; and raising inheritance taxes substantially. All of these embody desirable revisions in the tax law from an equity standpoint, and hence, in the words of Democratic economic adviser Arthur Okun, "yield virtue" as well as revenue.

As originally formulated, however, the tax proposals were ingeniously calculated to stimulate a desperate flight from McGovern among upper- and upper-middle-income voters. The proposed inheritance tax was to be sharply progressive, rising to a 100 percent levy on bequests above $500,000. At present, entire estates (rather than specific inheritances) are taxed and a maximum rate of 77 percent applies only to amounts above $10 million. The minimum income tax McGovern put forward would fall on all sources of income, whether capital gains or formerly nontaxable interest, and was fixed at 75 percent of the statutory rate (which now applies only to *taxable* receipts) on incomes above $50,000. Corporation taxes would be raised by $17 billion, a figure that implies not only the elimination of special depreciation allowances and the investment tax credit, but also lifting the basic corporation income tax rate from 48 to 52 percent.

COMING: The Number One Nixocrat—Robert Semple on the political future of John Connally

The initial alarm over these proposals prompted McGovern to take a full-page ad in the *Wall Street Journal,* assuring its readers that all was not as bad as it looked, and that first thoughts were subject to revision. The maximum tax on inheritances was dropped from 100 percent to 77 percent, and it was also explained that the senator had never intended to raise the basic corporation tax rate above 48 percent. In addition, as he emphasized in Wisconsin, McGovern promised to return one-half of the $28 billion in tax reform collections to the states and localities, earmarked for the reduction of property taxes.

But alas, and despite the new concessions, even if the net saving remained at $28 billion, there would be a net gain to the Treasury of only $14 billion. And according to the Brookings Institution's recent study of the budget, $17 billion in additional funds will be required in the next two years merely to meet built-in increases in the costs of ongoing federal programs (such as Medicare, Medicaid, and government employee retirement benefits), not to mention new projects. However, a comparison of the Brookings projections and the McGovern proposals is not so simple. We don't know, for example, whether McGovern would substitute the negative income tax for the entire social security system, for part of it, or for none of it.

The McGovern view of the Defense budget, versus the Brookings view, adds another element of uncertainty. The senator would trim defense spending by $20-$30 billion. The Brookings Institution asserts that so large a reduction is virtually impossible, since the military also has built-in (or previously authorized) increases in outlays. Although my own inclination is to side with McGovern on the point, the major thrust of the authoritative Brookings study seems inescapable: a substantial increase in tax rates over the next two years will be required even if no new federal programs are undertaken. Despite the high levies on the very rich McGovern calls for, it is not clear that his tax plan would yield sufficient revenue to cover built-in cost increases, plus the new programs he wants. The net yield of his tax reforms and the cut in military spending would be, at most, $45 billion. Estimated

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new program costs looming in education, water pollution control, day-care centers, public works, and national health insurance, in legislation that McGovern has supported, would come to about twice that amount.

3) *Employment, Inflation and Public Services.* Whatever reputation McGovern may have as a "far out liberal" can have no connection at all with his ideas on job creation and inflation. For in this sphere unqualified reliance is placed upon competition and private enterprise. McGovern would do away with present wage and price controls and concentrate on stimulating competition through lowering import barriers and through antitrust efforts, including a war on mergers. To reduce unemployment and expand the range of "public" services he would spend $10 billion on contracts with private industry for "public transit facilities, neighborhood health centers, day-care centers, and environmental protection programs." As he assured a *Business Week* interviewer, it would all "be done primarily by contracting with private industry, the way we contract for military production, but in combination with some public service employment. In fact, it is essential that the government be the employer of last resort for staffing up some of these areas." In addition, McGovern advocates subsidies for defense industries to expedite their conversion to peacetime work.

As explained by another of McGovern's advisers, MIT Professor Edwin Kuh, "The whole thrust of this program would be in the direction of decentralization," and would involve in this respect a shift of power and economic initiative from the federal government to individuals, private business and state and local governments. Perhaps this thrust explains why so many primary voters were torn between McGovern and George Wallace. Popular though it may be with some sectors of the public, and of academia too, it remains profoundly questionable whether a program so oriented can achieve the results that McGovern would undoubtedly place at the top of the list of national objectives.

For instance, McGovern's $10 billion expenditure program, together with his tax proposals, would almost certainly do more to stimulate inflation than employment. There are several reasons for this. The bulk of the unemployed—though not all, of course—are unskilled or at best, semiskilled. They are not the ones private industry is eager to engage when expanding operations. Private business contractors, operating under McGovern's program, would act as they normally do—that is, they would hire primarily skilled, experienced workers, and when necessary, as it usually is, would bid for their scarce services in competition with the rest of private industry. The result would be a rise in wages and prices but little net gain in employment. The inflationary impact would be reinforced if, as the Brookings study suggests, the general fiscal position of the McGovern program is long on outlays and short on taxes. Since inflation can be tolerated for just so long, as every President from Truman to Nixon has discovered, the subsequent outlook would be for a contrived recession, which is the only effective tool against inflation that conventional economic thinking has devised.

Indeed, the basic difficulty with the McGovern economic program as a whole lies in this compulsion to shove the federal government to the back of the stage. This accounts for the fact that the central measure proposed for helping the poor is a neat, antiseptic redistributional tax formula, neglecting the salient reality that equality, as a social goal, means equal opportunity to enjoy a sense of worth, to learn and to participate, to live a useful life. Even most welfare mothers (not to mention their male companions or husbands who split when social workers come around) have indicated their preference for jobs instead of handouts. And such jobs, offering decent pay, rewarding duties, and an opportunity to learn and to advance vocationally, can by and large only be provided by the federal government. In addition, the more useful jobs there are for those who are able and willing to work, the more generous society can afford to be to those who are not.

A recent econometric study by Federal Reserve Board Governor Andrew Brimmer showed that direct government employment was far more efficient, dollar for dollar, in providing jobs than government expenditures directed to private enterprise. If the computer were able to take account of the training and experience characteristics of the unemployed, which it was not, Brimmer's results would have been even more conclusive. For this and other reasons mentioned, I believe it safe to conclude that the only approach to full employment without inflation, now feasible, is a tax-financed program enabling the federal government to provide public services directly (such as mass transit and environmental control), thereby creating jobs for the unemployed. Such an approach would promote public employment as a prominent first resort in achieving important social objectives, not a tail-end "last resort" concerned with depressing make-work projects. It would also, without the need for a grand, class-dividing transfer of taxes, improve the distribution of income.

But even if the suggestion just made is put aside as unproven or impractical, the fact remains that McGovern's own program is notable neither for logical consistency nor irresistible political appeal. True, he seems to have survived the ineffectual assault of Hubert Humphrey. But can he do as well against the master tactician in the White House? Before McGovern is given the opportunity to try, I would urge him to reexamine his economic ideas and revamp his present proposals.

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Stanley Kauffmann on theater

Stages of Discussion

Some notes on recent theater events. Several of these productions have gone, but comment about them still seems in order.

The single most beautiful performance I saw in the last year was Christopher Walken's Caligula in Camus' play, with the Yale Repertory Theater. I can't review the production because I'm on the Yale drama faculty, but closeness must not keep me from noting the delicacy, strength, imaginative subtlety, and technical polish of Walken's work. He is one of the few current American theater actors who in themselves are never to be missed, whatever they are in.

For sheer visceral excitement, the high point of the year was a stretch of ten minutes or so in the middle of a 40-minute production of *Medea* at LaMama Theater Club. Everything I had heard about this production prejudiced me against it. It was in Euripides' Greek, with some choruses in Seneca's Latin; only a small audience was allowed, and they went through a ritual of admission. It sounded like stale off-off-Broadwayfaring.

The first moments confirmed prejudice. We were ushered into the ground-floor theater of LaMama, where I thought we were to see the play. Then, after about fifty people had arrived, we were conducted downstairs, past actors in costume holding candles and reciting lines in Greek or Latin, along a cinder-block corridor to the basement. Here we were seated on facing benches against the long sides of the rectangular room, with members of the chorus interspersed among us. At each of the narrow ends of the rectangle were some steps and a simple doorway. The ceiling was covered with billowing burlap. I was ready to leave.

Very soon I was rooted. The director, Andrei Servan, was moving to a simple strong idea: that the core of *Medea* is primal stuff, that comprehension of each utterance—when the play is known and the motions are elemental—is no more necessary here than in great opera. In both arts, cognition language may even be an impediment to full release. All that we need, in giant drama, is the impassioned sound of words whose general meaning we know. Details of verbiage only weigh us down.

One need not take this approach as a fiat for all classic productions in order to see how it worked in this instance. During the minutes when Jason and Medea faced each other at opposite ends of that small room, storming full-throatedly at each other in a completely foreign language, I felt the blood of this ancient drama quicken as I have rarely felt it in productions of large plays.

Servan prepared for these moments with intelligent patterns of movement; with Liz Swados' music-and-sounds, to create a barbaric aural atmosphere; with careful dynamics of the chorus; and, chiefly, by his success with his two principals, Priscilla Smith and Jamil Zakki. Smith looks more like Smith College than Colchis, but she and Zakki transcended themselves. Their bodies were completely invested in what they were doing, their voices were two full round columns battering at one another.

All the cast, even the children, were caught in Servan's intensity, and made a seamless fabric of conviction. I keep thinking even now of the children's dangling legs as, after being slaughtered, they were handed down through a gap in that burlap ceiling to their horror-struck father below.

Servan is a Rumanian, a student and associate of Peter Brook, and is now director-in-residence at LaMama. Productions there don't "run": they appear, disappear, and often reappear. *Medea* has since gone touring in Europe and may be back. Servan will presumably be back and must be watched. The stuntishness in him is much less than his main thrust: quintessential guts and revelation.

The homosexual theater continues to flourish; there were two new productions recently. *Eunuchs of the Forbidden City* was written and directed by Charles Ludlam and presented by the Ridiculous Theatrical Company. (I saw it at the Westbeth theater; it travels.) There is also the not-to-be-confused Playhouse of the Ridiculous, directed by John Vaccaro, which recently presented *Persia: A Desert Cheapie* by Vaccaro and Bernard Roth at LaMama. Neither of these shows was nearly as interesting as previous works by Ronald Tavel, Vaccaro, or Ludlam, although the latter's new work showed feeling for rhetoric. Both of these shows were quickly boring but are very much part of a fascinating phenomenon.

One salient fact about this kind of theater is that it is utterly homosexual in ambience but only occasionally deals with homosexuality as a subject or with any kind of sexual practice. A little gross joking with a scepter in one, some graphically mimed quick ecstasy in the other. The real aim is the bursting of private histrionic suppression: males behaving like females or, more accurately, behaving like homosexual cartoons of females. The Ludlam play is Chinese parody-fable, the Vaccaro play

(continued on page 34)

Films Worth Seeing

Cabaret. A clever Broadway musical director, Bob Fosse, makes a clever film musical. Isherwood's Berlin filtered through "smart" show biz.

A Day in the Death of Joe Egg. Utterly unsentimental story about a young English couple with a spastic child. Intelligence, anger, sexiness, and wit are the tone, not pathos.

The Hospital. Paddy Chayefsky's script ultimately cops out, as one would expect, but the dialogue crackles and so does George C. Scott as the menopausal medical chief.

Malcolm X. A straight, clean documentary, synopsized from the autobiography, that gets its power from the power of its subject, a phenomenal man.

Pocket Money. Paul Newman and Lee Marvin rape every rule of Western drama—and make us relax and enjoy it. Very amiable Americana.

The Sorrow and the Pity. Will surely rank among the best documentaries. Marcel Ophuls has woven the occupied France of the '40s with the survivors of the present to make a 4½ hour gem.

Tokyo Story. Yasujiro Ozu's gentle masterpiece about life as transition and permanence, parents watching their children become parents, while the world changes and stays the same. Superb.

SK

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Japanese Modern

Spring Snow

by Yukio Mishima

(Knopf; $7.95)

Mishima was an immensely fertile writer, and *Spring Snow* is the most capacious and technically accomplished of his novels, at least of those that have been translated into English. It is the first in a cycle of four novels, the other three soon to be published in this country, which were completed on the eve of Mishima's suicide in 1970, and which evidently were intended as his masterpiece. It is not as long as *Forbidden Colors*, his famous novel about homosexuality, but is better shaped and even more intricately plotted. Serious novelists in America may have abandoned storytelling, but *Spring Snow* has an elaborate story to tell. Of all Japanese novelists Mishima seems to have understood best how to construct a plot that was more than a loose line of fortuitous episodes, how to write from his characters outward toward the actions they have to take. His escape from the confessional mode of his earliest fiction was complete. *Spring Snow* is not at all an I-novel, although the hero's self-absorption is one of its most pervasive themes.

Set in Tokyo in 1912-13, the action involves people in or near the minuscule court aristocracy at a time when the great 19th-century heroes, the Meiji Emperor among them, had succeeded in making Japan a world power and were being replaced by a less charismatic, larger elite of bureaucrats, businessmen and politicians. The milieu Mishima has chosen is thus extremely narrow. One could have wished for more of a look at ordinary people. The few glimpses given of their condition are memorable. But the Tokyo that Mishima wishes to write about in *Spring Snow* exists in a moment just past the first peak of Japan's modern greatness, when he can look both ways: toward the past with nostalgia for its fading elegance, a milieu for which he himself, a Peers' School graduate, can feel some affinity and even reverence; and toward the future with satire of its pretentiousness and vulgarity. On one level the book is a solemn celebration of the most ancient symbols of Japanese nationalism: the Imperial House, Shinto ritual, esoteric Buddhist practices associated with the aristocracy alone, classic Japanese landscape and the arts. On another level it is a biting commentary on the ambitions of the new, more socially diffuse elite.

In the rarified court aristocracy in Tokyo, whose remote center is the Emperor, live characters whose behavior derives ultimately from classical Japanese literary tradition. The hero, son of a Marquis in the new peerage and of relatively modest forebears, is another of Mishima's rather dreamy, narcissistic young men, who for much of the novel seems able only to be petulantly self-centered and beautiful. He sulks, takes advantage of others, flashes his even white teeth (teeth seem almost a fetish in Mishima), and writes in his "dream diary." Slowly, however, a story builds round his growing interest in the daughter of a blueblood Count, and hers in him. As the plot deepens, Mishima draws upon devices that will be familiar to readers of the *Tale of Genji:* servants go about on devious errands, assignations are arranged at the beach by moonlight (to which the heroine arrives in a T-model Ford), letters that should have been opened are torn up, others read that should have been destroyed, and so on. Characters with the temperaments of 10th century Japanese live in vast, "Western-style" premises heated by radiators imported from Chicago. Listless Counts out of Heian times endure beefy-faced Marquises who graduated from Oxford and who represent the wave of the Japanese future. Law students about to enter the ranks of the new elite earnestly ponder the relative merits of Roman law and the Hindu laws of Manu.

Japan in 1912 was at least as incongruous and confused a place as all this sounds. But while a love story set in such a vanished world is bound to seem

Old Man River

no longer what he used to be
nor am I though I never was
what he used to be but
I'm scared of livin'
and tired of dyin'
while Old Man River's
just a sweet ole sentimental song but still

when the sky is low
and the sun hangs red
above the riverbed
and the willowbranches bend
where the river runs
you think well

some diseases are incurable
but we don't know which ones
so we keep going upstream
downstream
all around the townstream
Old Man River he keep
us rollin' along

PETER MEINKE

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dated, sentimental and sometimes funny, the people in it are as believable in their way as the vivid denizens of homosexual bars, the politicians, housewives, and sexually frustrated college students of other Mishima novels. And what is perhaps most interesting about *Spring Snow* is that, for once, one of his beautiful boys grows up, even if just for a little while, gets out of his mirror-posturing, falls in love with the girl, takes her to bed and gets her pregnant.

Mishima was a virtuoso who wrote too much, and his work was inevitably very uneven, some of it slick and unconvincing; but he communicated a wider grasp of human nature than any writer of his generation in Japan, and he ranks with Kawabata and Tanizaki among the most distinguished novelists of the last 30 or 40 years. His work will put off some readers by its rather arty preoccupation with beauty, which sometimes degenerates into exhibitionism. Beauty he linked with art, with reality, with sexuality, and from the beginning, with death. The direction of his work, if not of his life, was already clear in his early book, *Confessions of a Mask*, the agonized reflections of a young man of homosexual inclinations who had to grow up somehow in the repressive society of Japan during the Second World War. Here is already one key aspect of Mishima's world, a world of enforced fantasizing. This book gave its author a quick, predictable reputation. Western critics called him a Japanese Gide; Baudelaire and Proust were mentioned in his jacket blurbs. I should have thought that Pater and Wilde would have come closer to the mark: the swan-like necks of the dream-girls in Pre-Raphaelite paintings are not too far from the "rich white flesh" of the napes of Mishima's heroines. Some of his other characters, like the Kaburagis in *Forbidden Colors*, give off at least as much of the aura of Aubrey Beardsley and the *Yellow Book* as of Baudelaire or Gide. The Marquis in *Spring Snow* reminds one of Queensberry. Certainly Mishima read and was influenced by European writers, but his "Satanism" and estheticism cannot be explained merely by foreign influences.

He was both attracted and repelled by the materialism of modern Japanese life. Highly educated, belonging to the upper class, he grew to manhood during the collapse of Japanese national power and confidence in the war, and all his creative work was done during the years of Japan's prodigious scrambling back into the sun between 1945 and 1970. He saw deeply into the gritty selfishness and hypocrisy of much of postwar Japanese society, its empty emphasis on quantity, on "growth"; and this, plus his predisposition to sexual fantasy and theatricalism, set him to writing books about young men in search of perfect beauty. Thus, frustrated acolytes worshipped Buddhist temples and burned them down to achieve some sort of catharsis or autonomy (*The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*). Sailors who were supposedly different from the rest of us had to be destroyed when they were found to be only too "normal" after all (*The Sailor Who Fell From Grace With The Sea*). Impossibly glamorized male homosexuals inherited fortunes with which to pursue their careers (*Forbidden Colors*). Many of the heroes of these books find their solutions only in sexuality and end in some form of *Liebestod*. The cry that passion rules reason in a sense became his trademark, and along with that sometimes went the view of woman as an ornament or plaything. But he was far too keen and curious an observer of Japanese life merely to write metaphors about the unity of sex, love, death and beauty. In some of his works one runs headlong into people who are not merely personified philosophical abstractions but who are so objectively moving, so filled with life, that they cannot fail to involve any reader in the human situations in which they are involved.

One such character is the woman in the marvelous short story, "Death in Midsummer," whose two children have drowned and who learns how swiftly grief erodes and how fiercely it can be reawakened. Another is the widow in *Thirst For Love*, one of Mishima's best books, who kills the man who deprecates and ignores her. Perhaps Mishima cared no more nor less for her than for his beautiful young heroes, but I care more. I also care for Kazu, the proprietress of the restaurant in *After the Banquet*, who gives of her energy and spirit to help elect her moralistic husband to office, and then properly leaves him when he condemns her for it. And in *Spring Snow*, there is one moment worth all the rest. Satoko, the heroine, after her abortion, decides to become a Buddhist nun, which means that all her hair is cut off and her head shaved. Whereupon her parents and those of the hero, the cause of all the trouble, can think of nothing but stratagems to get her through the scheduled ceremonies of betrothal to a Prince of the blood. In a scene of fine satire reminiscent of Hogarth, they decide that a wig will do the trick. Immediately "an atmosphere of cordiality pervaded the room, however fragile the fiction that sustained it. For the fiction supplied them with that tangible element so vital at this moment. No one considered Satoko's soul; it was her hair alone that pertained to the national interest."

Toward the end of his life Mishima turned back to the Japanese past in his work. I believe that some of the other books in the final cycle still to be published will dwell upon the more martial aspects of that past. *Spring Snow* captures certain immemorial traits of Japanese personality and patterns of human behavior of the aristocratic class, at a moment when the veneer of Westernization was still very thin, but when premonitions of Japan's participation in the general modern predicament were already being felt in Tokyo. In the last hundred or so pages of the novel there are some elegiac passages, loving descriptions of Japanese land and seascape (his descriptions of clouds are astonishing) that are reminiscent of Tanizaki in *The Makioka Sisters*. But while Tanizaki may ultimately be ranked as the greater writer, Mishima's work was more complicated, more a part of what should be called "Japanese modern." While he was alive, there could hardly be any guessing where his work might turn next. Now that he is dead at 45, we can be glad that a writer of his stature has been brought to the notice of the West through a long series of excellent translations, many of them by people who have devoted their careers to putting Japanese literature before the international public, and thereby enlightening that public about the drift of modern Japanese history.

Lawrence Olson

COMING
Saul Maloff reviews
George Woodcock's
new study of
Aldous Huxley

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Innocence Abroad

Sahib: An American Misadventure in India

by Carl Pope

(Liveright; $6.95)

After I was about ten pages into this remarkable account of a young couple's experiences in saving the world, two things came to mind. The first was a remark made by Hawthorne concerning his brief stay at Brook Farm, that *he* could always go home, while the farmer shoveling manure next to him could not. The second was a paradigm of the American ambassadorial mentality provided by a Navy officer, a veteran of the Second World War, who lectured to me and about 25 other Reserve Officer Candidates one summer, in 1953, about the importance of honoring the customs and beliefs of native peoples. This officer had parachuted into the interior of China during the war, an extremely hazardous mission, and he had also spent some time in India. He seemed to be very well qualified to give advice about conduct while in a strange culture. Then one day, without apparently noticing any discrepancy, he told us what was to him a hilarious story about the time he lost all patience with a Brahman bull standing in the way of his Jeep. Tired of observing native customs, he hopped out and kicked the bull "right in the ass." He also was very nearly stoned to death by the crowd that quickly gathered.

As I read further into Pope's narrative, various stories by Conrad came to mind, stories concerned with the perilous outpost of sanity which is the peculiar dwelling place of bureaucrats on the fringes of Empire. And finally, and perhaps most definitively, I thought of Orwell's epical essay, "Shooting An Elephant," and then I began to wonder just what in hell Pope studied while he was majoring in "Problems of Emerging Societies" at Harvard. Obviously, English and American literature, not being "relevant," was scanted. I wondered if, somewhere along the way, perhaps during his Peace Corps training prior to his arrival in India, lessons in Hindi were spelled with chapters from *Passage to India* (Forster's not Whitman's). I see no sign of such reading anywhere.

Pope gives us a very clear, even photographic account of his experiences as a Peace Corps worker disseminating birth-control information at the local level in India, recording his tiny victories and his immense defeats, including his decision to leave the village of Barhi six months before his two years were up. But his narrative is uncolored by any sense of his *own* culture, though he seems to have brought some books along, and is able to lend the plays of Shakespeare to an ambitious young Indian bureaucrat who preferred improving his mind to improving the lot of his countrymen—earning Pope's well-warranted scorn. Perhaps Pope thought to achieve a clean, lean narrative line, and he certainly has done that. This is a very effective story well told. But the impression I got was of a terrifyingly uncluttered mind, a mind as pristine and as ignorant as the minds of his equivalents, the young missionaries who went to Asia by the inspired droves during the 19th and early 20th centuries, equipped only with a fundamentalist gospel of truth and that immaculate state of interior decoration which is often dignified with the word, "Innocence."

Of Pope's and the young missionaries' dedication and sincerity one can doubt nothing. The missionaries had all their teeth pulled and Pope learned Hindi and lived on a native diet. The missionaries propagated the Gospels, Pope handed out prophylactics by the gross, in the hope of stemming the rising tide of suffering humanity. He worked very hard against terrible odds, including a ponderous bureaucracy which had inherited a British reverence for records but never had acquired a British love of system. Nothing got done but everything got recorded. And this perverse bureaucracy fed like a cancer on the pervasive Indian stoicism, the universal attitude that whatever happened (which most often didn't) was the will of God. If one missed a bus or train, that was the will of God. If the bus or train wouldn't let you on, that also was God's wish.

Children, too, were an expression of God's will, and Pope came to realize that India had inherited all of Victorian England's worst qualities while retaining all her own most inert properties, producing an alloy of cast iron and lead, which makes a dandy paper-weight but is useful for very little else. In the year and a half that he and his wife were in India, they learned a great deal about the kind of machine that turns wheels within wheels without accomplishing a bit of work. What they learned did not in the least reconcile Pope to his situation. In the end he shot his own elephant in one embarrassing outburst of rage against a bus-driver and conductor who refused to let him climb aboard with his bicycle. What he was fighting for, he realized afterward, was the sanctity of the individual. The Indians recognized only the splenetic rage of the Sahib—the White Ruler—and with a great show of polite concern prepared to filter it off in a mass of bureaucratic paperwork.

Pope always knew, or should have known, that the concept of the individual is meaningless in most of Asia. This experience certainly carried him over the threshold of awareness, and he made plans shortly thereafter for departure. He saw that his presence hampered rather than helped the few Indians who were accomplishing good work at the local level, carried along by the belief, expressed in the Gita, that one must be satisfied with good deeds without concern for their results. It is a remarkably suitable ethic for India. Americans tend to be more pragmatic (which is merely the other side of idealism), and are not averse to kicking Sacred Cows that they may more quickly achieve their ends. Americans like to get things done, and fast.

They also believe that Democracy is the best system for getting things done. One aspect of Pope's innocence which particularly stuck in my craw was his attempt throughout his experience to become "one of the people." He is not unaware of the irony involved, yet never really abandons the notion that if he had only been successful in achieving this populist ambition he would have also been more successful in his mission. On arrival, he shed his European clothes for the native dress, and felt hostile towards those Indian officials who did not do likewise. He tried, that is, to be more Indian than the In-

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dians, while at the same time remonstrating with them over their strange and futile "ways" of getting things not done, or over customs clearly harmful to their welfare, like the wasteful habit of throwing enormously expensive weddings.

Being "effective" in Pope's mind is linked with being accepted as an equal by the people he is working with, yet it is obvious from his account that Indians are locked into a rigidly authoritarian frame, both social and psychological, and that "being" an Indian means becoming "unbeing," a mixture of stoicism and authoritarianism. Had he wished to accomplish his ultimate goal, Pope could have thrown his Sahib weight around, but his democratic instincts revolted against that. He understood the teachings of the Gita but did not really believe in them, very much like Thoreau before him. He wanted to educate, to inspire the Indian people to help themselves, and yet it was obvious to him that the one co-worker who was successful at this was a native Indian whose drive and zeal were apparently derived from his particular religion, not from any static electricity rubbed off from his American partner.

Because Pope's narrative is drawn from his own immediate experience, it is both fascinating and relevant, and hopefully will be included in many freshman syllabi. *Sahib* is certainly well-written, a model for the study of expository prose, and I should like to see it on a reading list along with some of Orwell's anti-imperialistic essays, and at least one of Conrad's novels, *Heart of Darkness* in particular. If I were the teacher of such a course, I should call attention to the scene of the gunboat firing useless rounds of ammunition into a blank, unresponsive jungle. I would also emphasize the caricatures of bureaucratic madness in Conrad's book, and go on to discuss the various manifestations of imperialism. I should try to point out that unleashing Pope's immaculate innocence on the interior of India was a paradigm of the Peace Corps, itself but another version of the incredibly innocent imperialism of President Kennedy, a well-meaning but ineffectual to say nothing of wasteful and even dangerous "mission," like the exploration of the moon and the occupation of Vietnam. For President Kennedy was educated at Harvard also, and was not himself particularly well-read in English and American literature.

John Seelye

Where Do Schools Come From?

No Particular Place to Go: The Making of A Free High School

by Steve Bhaerman and Joel Denker

(Simon and Schuster; $6.95)

Free Schools

by Jonathan Kozol

(Houghton Mifflin; $4.95)

On Equality of Education Opportunity

edited by Frederick Mosteller and Daniel P. Moynihan

(Vintage; $3.95)

Making New Schools: The Liberation of Learning

by Joseph Turner

(McKay; $5.95)

We wonder what we can do to make schools better, or how we can set up a school-sanctuary so that some children can have it better; how to fool with the curriculum, or what is the best or at least a better way of teaching. The list of questions can be as long or short as we want it to be. For the list doesn't matter. Beyond the list are the real schools in the real world.

Turner usefully sums up the last decade or so of ruminations about teaching and curriculum, nothing new here. Mosteller and Moynihan trundle out a set of essays that go over The Data once again. Theirs is another worldly adventure: 79 Harvard people and fellow travellers (only 16 of them get into the book) looking into the reams of HEW stuff for the answers to and for new questions about the (in)equality of education in America. Bhaerman and Denker nourish, fight for, and finally flee Free Schools, and Kozol deplores their *kind* of free schools—hip-freak-loose, grope-group dens that have no meaning, change nothing.

It, the list of questions, doesn't matter unless there is the first understanding: society doesn't grow out of schools; schools grow out of society. Educational equality exists in a society in which there is *de facto* equality. Learning is liberated in a liberated society. Schools go places on having particular places to go. Kozol is certainly closest among all these people to seeing that a school must operate out of an integral piece of turf: from a place and in the middle of a place and a people with goals and organized motion toward those goals. But he (wrongly, I believe) thinks that a school can just hook up with the society around it by concerning itself with, say, the lead paint problem or sickle cell anemia.

Kozol's book is really a handbook for those who would set up a Free School. It is a helpful guide for those together people whose goals entail a school. Unfortunately, it is also there for people whose only goal is a school, because Kozol rises rarely to political analysis though often to outrage. Much of the outrage is (correctly, I believe) directed toward the likes of Bhaerman and Den-

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ker (he does not name them in particular) because he thinks they are running from significant struggle and confrontation, though certainly not from confrontation and struggle itself as their troubled book readily reveals. They are confused in that they mistake a school, their miscellaneous collection of lost souls, for a society. They do not realize that the suburban schools they fled (as teachers) reflected a necessary functional relationship between school and society, albeit a society (and therefore schools) that they are dissatisfied with. Nor do they understand that the Free School they made was a fish out of water.

Schools don't remake society: society remakes schools. Every coherent theory of society and government entails a school, articulated or not; it usually is.

For example, Peter Kropotkin in his early essay "Must We Occupy Ourselves with an Examination of the Ideal of a Future System?" (as well as in later essays concerned specifically with problems of education, e.g., "Integral Education" [1901]) accords education a central role in his anarchistic society in which there will be "equality in education—not merely the possibility of equality in education, but actually, in fact." He would "close all universities, academies, and other institutes of higher learning, and . . . open everywhere trade schools." Education would bring together hand and mind, for the sole purpose of improving the conditions of the masses.

Which theory all sounds a good deal like present Chinese practice (if we can manage to overlook Kropotkin's libertarian respect for the basic right of individual choice—though even for Kropotkin "education . . . will and must be compulsory") in which there is a complex interplay between learning and doing, between science and the present and pressing needs of Chinese society. The "festival of revolutionization" closed the universities but they are now open and serving a very broadly based population and not simply the privileged few. Mao's China is certainly not Kropotkin's future system, but Kropotkin would be happier with the present state of affairs in China than he was with post-revolutionary Russia.

In the rising Appalachia movement education about the past is aimed towards solving present problems. And in Greene County, Alabama, the blacks and the National Democratic Party of

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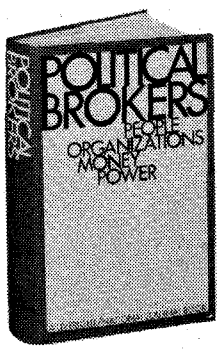

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Alabama (NDPA) control all county offices. They control the schools. In that little corner of the Deep South, education flows from a set of principles quite different from what prevails throughout most of the South and the rest of the nation. Greene County is moreover a real place: with old people and young, farm people and town folk, businessmen and workers. Its schools are part of a society in motion.

Most Free Schools, certainly Bhaerman and Denker's and even in large part Kozol's conception of a Free School, are not a natural part of any terrain. Thus they die or disappear (or move on only to die there) at a fantastically high rate. Kropotkin's society is nowhere for them to live in; China is over there; and Greene County has got its own integral thing. An American society in which Free Schools can thrive has yet to be born, and so they will die, saving some lives and souls as they go down, fighting some interesting holding actions. Kozol can tell you how to fight them best and how to stay alive the longest. And that's worth knowing.

Wayne O'Neil

Reconsideration

The Myth of the Negro Past

If life among the footnotes can tell us anything about a book, it's that *The Myth of the Negro Past* is one of those anomalies, the negatively influential book, one whose message is so disagreeable or so significantly wrong that all who would pass it by must first confront it. So it has seemed these last 30 years, a bothersome obstruction for integrationists such as Harold Issacs, for racialists like Carlton Putnam, for historians Christopher Lasch and Stanley Elkins, for the Panthers, for the Black Muslims. Thirty years ago, as now, there was paradoxical comfort to be found in treating the history of Afro-Americans as an exercise in morality, by discovering and cataloging the costs of American racial injustice and assigning the blame where one would: Western imperialism, capitalism, American aristocratic leanings, the nightmare sexual cravings and guilts of Anglo-Saxon blood, whatever. The black man all the while was treated as a cypher, a casualty of the sociology of pathos. No one was more aware than Herskovits of how whites were expected to write about blacks, for in his close involvement with W. E. B. DuBois, the NAACP, and the National Urban League he had achieved impeccable civil rights credentials by doing just such writing. Still, when he began the first chapter of *The Myth* he made virtually everyone in the country his intellectual enemy by taking another course.

The Myth of the Negro Past
by Melville J. Herskovits
Originally published by Harper in 1941
Now available from Beacon Press, $2.95

To say what Herskovits' book is about is easy, but not so easy to show how he was about it. He starts with what he saw as the problem with both popular and scholarly conceptions of Afro-American history and society: the ambivalence towards Africa. At one moment, he says, there is a willingness to dismiss the parts of American black behavior and culture which are "different" (from that of Anglo-Americans) as residues of African savagery and backwardness, and at the next instance to treat them as simple American-grown deviance. It was the latter view that formed the core of Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma* (1944) when he said that "American Negro culture is a distorted development, or a pathological condition of the general American culture." But how, Herskovits asked, can both things be true at the same time, and more important how can either be said to be true when American knowledge of African history and culture is so limited, and white conceptions of black life-styles almost as bad?

The upshot of this American historical ignorance and arrogance is a fully developed mythology of the Afro-American past which Herskovits summarized this way: 1) Negroes are childlike in character, and, unlike the American Indians, adjusted to and accepting unpleasant circumstances; 2) only the poorest elements of African peoples were caught by the slavers and shipped to the New World; 3) the diversity of slaves, their lack of a common language and native culture left them with no basis for a common culture under slavery; 4) even if the slaves had had such a common culture and had been able to sustain it under the conditions of slavery, the relative inferiority of African culture in the face of Euro-American culture would have led them to abandon their own; consequently 5) Afro-Americans are people without a past.

It was this mythological sequence that *The Myth of the Negro Past* was intended to refute. Using a mass of historical and anthropological material on Africa and many of the countries of the Americas, Herskovits set out to document the nature of the slave trade and the culture of American slaves more fully than anyone had done. He offered a radically different picture of the origin of slaves and how they coped, one that provided a basis for seeing that there were many means—both non-violent and violent—by which slaves resisted the complete cultural brutalization of slavery. He offered examples of African cultural continuities and derivatives in Afro-American religion, politics, social structure, child care, art, music, food, speech, dance, work habits, folk literature, interpersonal style and even body posture and gestures, and while doing so he also built a stronger case for rejecting racial arguments for the sources of these behavior patterns. If this were not enough, he called attention to something that European observers and the slaveholders themselves had fretted over and that white America secretly feared: that blacks had begun to influence and radically alter the lives of white Americans. In the South, especially, white cuisine, speech, manners, music, religion, sports, all had been tarred by the brush.

Throughout, Herskovits took many black cultural practices and put them in a new frame of reference. More, he transvalued the slave experience and Africa itself. Substantiation of his claims came in his unprecedented anthropological approach to the United States as well as to primitives. By using slave history from Africa, the Caribbean and elsewhere he was able to show parallel processes at work everywhere that Europeans had attempted enslavement of African peoples. He demonstrated, for

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example, that there were similarities in the vocabularies and grammars of black peoples throughout the Americas, and that they systematically differed in part from whites'; and the demonstration made it difficult to continue saying that black dialects were nothing more than broken, bastardized, ignorant versions of European languages. Similarly, he showed that the high ceremony and pomp of Afro-American burial societies and social fraternities had their parallels in the cooperative work groups and secret societies of West Africa, Haiti, and Brazil; hence they could no longer be dismissed as the foolish extravagance of inferiors wistfully mimicking their betters.

While the book did have a few influential black and white supporters, it encountered virulent opposition from so authoritative a sociologist as E. Franklin Frazier of Howard University, and from the very Carnegie Corporation-Gunnar Myrdal project for which Herskovits had first written the book as a memorandum. It was clear from the disquieted reactions that followed the publication of *The Myth* that anthropology was a subversive science.

What made this book so unsettling? First, its method. It was Herskovits' insight that to understand what had happened to blacks one had to start over again and find new ways to discover and use Afro-American history and culture. To accomplish this, he cut on the bias, and drew information from civil libertarians and racists, from defenders of slavery and social reformers, from anyone who had made direct observations of black life and reported it. But in doing so, he turned around and scored redneck and radical alike for misunderstanding or maligning what they had seen and not understood. Just as disturbing was Herskovits' insistence that in a variety of ways, by a variety of means, Africa was still alive in the Americas. The spectre of Africa was a little too much for a middle-class black readership who, like other upward-mobile American ethnics, were in the process of disidentifying with their parents, with the South, with slavery and white stereotypes of what black social behavior meant.

But there was perhaps a more pointed objection to Herskovits' thesis, and one which assumes greater importance today. It was then becoming unpopular to refer publicly to blacks as having defects or failures as a *race*; and it was becoming customary to tally and specify failures, real or imagined, in infinite and sordid detail as long as the blame for those defects was laid at the doorstep of whites. Indeed, the study of race relations in America has seldom been more than this. While some blacks—notably Albert Murray of late—have complained that this apparently enlightened form of diagnosis in the name of social justice looks suspiciously like a continuation of the old American custom of the denigration of everything black, many other Afro-Americans have accepted the practice as a necessary prelude to social redress. But Herskovits did something altogether different. He stressed black accomplishments and black influences and attributed these achievements to blacks themselves and the African resources their ancestors brought with them. No one had done this before, and likewise no one knew how to deal with such an argument. Who knew what to do with the contention that what blacks did with one another was equally important as what whites did with blacks?

But all of that was three decades ago. Now we know, or should know, that the economics of social segregation, not physique and genetics, give us the insights we need into America's "dilemma." But what has become of the "myth" Herskovits sketched out? Doubtlessly there are many whites who still accept the old mythic explanations as the truth. But for most people a new myth now holds—that the slavery experience was so harsh and systematic as to have eliminated every aspect of each slave's previous life in Africa. Black culture by this argument can be nothing but slave culture or the negative culture of poverty and racism. Though the new myth puts the blame on the oppressors instead of the oppressed, the cultural outcome is much the same as that of the old myth. Except for ambivalent exceptions such as music and dance, virtually all other elements of black cultural tradition and development are treated as deviances and pathologies, not the resourcefulness

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

LAWRENCE OLSON *teaches history at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn. Poet* PETER MEINKE *is in Switzerland, on leave from Florida Presbyterian College.* JOHN SEELYE *teaches English at the University of Connecticut.* WAYNE O'NEIL *teaches humanities and linguistics at MIT.* JOHN F. SZWED *is the director of the Center for Urban Ethnography at the University of Pennsylvania.*

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of human beings. With assumptions such as these, black culture for most people appears (to use Ralph Ellison's terms) to be nothing more than the sum of its brutalization.

For blacks, it was the fate of *The Myth of the Negro Past* to come too late for the romantic primitivism of the Harlem Renaissance and too early for the cultural revitalization of the Black is Beautiful 1960s. Many years have passed without the common-sense scholarship which Herskovits called for, and it is thus no wonder that talk of Black English, a black spiritual community, and a New World tradition of African art, manners and politics looks madly out of touch with the American realities of the War on Poverty, OEO, and Early Childhood Intervention.

Meanwhile American blacks continue to have to reinvent their past every generation, at the moment seeking what they can find of African cultures. Like Richard Wright leaving his father standing on the red clay of Mississippi for the greener pastures of the North, they remain ambivalent towards their Southern roots. And while whites shake their heads like bemused Reconstructionists, Arthur Jensen tells us in *The New York Times* that only the poorer elements of Africa were brought to this country by the slavers. . . .

John F. Szwed

Edmund Wilson (1895-1972)

Edmund Wilson, who died on June 12, at 77, was associate editor and book reviewer on *The New Republic* from 1926 to 1931. In that time he spoke his mind on most of the subjects known to man. He was a tireless reader, scholar and essayist and also tried his hand at fiction and drama. Less well known are his poems, but the few that were printed, all fairly good-humored light verse with a rationalist bent, may illuminate a part of him not readily found in his prose. He liked, for example, to meddle with extravagant rhymes. Printed below is an excerpt from a long poem printed in 1949, not in *The New Republic* but in the little magazine *Furioso*, "The Pickerel Pond," which he described as a "double pastoral" with "amphisbaenic (backward rhyming) endings" that is, rhymes like "tomato" and "automat," "gay" and "egg." The scene at the beginning of the poem is a picnic beside the pond with an assortment of Russian emigres, old bolsheviks, children and poodles. He describes the meal and the conversation, then shifts to a few days later when he is alone beside the pond fishing and thinking of himself and his relation to the people at the party:

> Was I there? did I share their mild revel?
> Did I listen to all their palaver?

He concludes by describing himself struggling with fishes and words:

> No pickerel has plunged to my lure,
> As the sky squeezes down its last lemon
> And the lake gleams a blacker enamel.
> In this pond of the pan of my skull,
> Where spawned thought should take body, the luck's
> No better . . .
> Till, as even the shallows grow dimmer,
> As I lose my last live-bait amid
> Mosquitoes that needle a mood
> Masochistic, benumbed by our doom,
> All such mutinous music as muttered
> Between the bleak spring and mild autumn
> Now but hobbles and stutters, half-dumb:
> Hungry pickerel that nuzzle the mud.

Next week we will publish a reminiscence by Malcolm Cowley, who worked on The New Republic *with Edmund Wilson.*

In Brief

The Walk of the Conscious Ants
by Taylor Morris

(Knopf; $6.95)

If you are tired of listening to tedious accounts of auto trips—complete with route numbers, names of motels and their brand of cleanliness—this daily account of a *walk* to Canada is a welcome change and one is tempted to say, don't spare the details! What else happened that day? what else did you see or experience or feel or suddenly understand? how did the townfolks react this time? for this is a group of college students (plus an English teacher, Taylor Morris, his wife and two eldest children —21 all told) from Franklin Pierce College in Rindge, NH, who decided to walk for 40 days instead of staying in the classroom. The course, named only because it had to be, was Philosophy of Walking, EN 423, and was partially funded by the Ford Foundation. The necessary gear accompanied the walkers in a VW bus.

These walkers experienced every painful step and change in the weather from NH to Nova Scotia, a distance of 600 miles, and tried various experiments in heightening awareness to surroundings and people. One day of walking in silence was attempted, another day of fasting; half of one day was spent leading a blindfolded friend by the hand while trying to describe what he saw and helping the other to experience through touch, smell and hearing—then the two switched roles. Meetings were held periodically to discuss reactions, sensations, means of achieving awareness, means of getting along with each other.

Each day is described. There are anecdotes about various individuals' experiences, a map and description of the route taken (they strived for back roads and small towns and a distance of about 15 miles a day), special points of interest (a lake, covered bridge, antique shop, old-fashioned general store, a tree), meal planning and preparation, and the mapping of the next day's route and search for a place to stay. The most vivid descriptions in the book are of the people who greet the walkers, sometimes with sullen stares and obscene remarks, and sometimes generously. The generous ones are willing to risk their neigh-

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bors' wrath by providing a place to pitch the tent, and sometimes express a desire for the freedom to join the trek themselves.

Reflexions on Poetry & Poetics
by Howard Nemerov

(Rutgers University Press; $10)

Nemerov likes to wait in the grass for somebody to be stupid, then jump on him. He has been jumping now for more than 30 years and through a dozen or more books, and in this latest volume, a collection of miscellaneous lectures and reviews, he has a number of worthy targets. He jumps, for example, on the "and" in the title of a poetry bash he attended, "Poetry and the National Conscience," by pointing out that the "and" confers "existence on whatever things stand to either side of it," so that poetry, which under other circumstances might be found impossible to define, and the national conscience, which under other circumstances might be found nonexistent, are suddenly admitted as solid citizens.

Other targets: computer poetry; an anthology of "naked poetry"; complaints about the difficulty of modern poetry; questionnaires (including one of his own); extravagant reviews of slim volumes of verse; and bits and pieces of political sagacity, such as President Eisenhower's "things are more like they are now than they've ever been before."

The lengthiest pieces in the volume are not, however, essentially rejoinders but meditations, mostly upon the nature of imagination. Nemerov moves gracefully in and out of several worlds of discourse—esthetics, psychoanalysis, even physics—and thereby does honor to the English Department world he inhabits, where too often an assortment of narrow views of the life of poetry prevails, unquestioned.

Journeys
by Edmund S. Muskie

(Doubleday; $5.95)

If all the year's books by office seekers were put end to end we'd have a hundred yards of ghostly flannel. The man from Maine now makes his contribution, and as in the case of the recent McCloskey volume it arrives on the campaign scene when the campaign appears to be over. Oh well, it is nice to read about Muskie's childhood (he even wrote poesy back then, including an ode to Lindbergh's kidnapped child that began, "Of what use are fame and glory/They are but the empty praise of fickle mobs") and his relations with Lyndon Johnson ("he was interested in my serving his political purpose to whatever extent I might be willing") and his feelings about his own Lincoln image (he likes it). It is also nice, but maybe a little bit *less* nice, to meditate about this man as a political thinker. If there is one quality dominating what he describes as his "ruminative book" it is a deliberate vagueness. He is in favor of all the good things—peace, clean water and air, freedom, equality—and he devotes a pious chapter to each; yet when he issues his plans and programs they come out looking like cotton candy. Another way of putting it is that Muskie has been running on a "character" platform; he would have us think of him standing for experience, integrity and crackerbarrel highmindedness rather than free lunches or down-with-Lockheed, and in fact his best quiet irony—of which he has a good store—is expended upon those who set out confidently to save the world with a new law or tax. Thus he winds up his ruminations by insisting that he has "no magic answers," yet goes on, perhaps overconfidently in the face of that negative, to say that he does "want to work toward restoring, win or lose, something that John Kennedy offered us, which was a sense of hope; what President Truman offered, which was a sense of crisp decision; what President Franklin Roosevelt offered, which was a sense of recovery and destiny." How one can work toward all that without greater programmatic specificity than is demonstrated in *Journeys* is a question that has hung over his candidacy all year.

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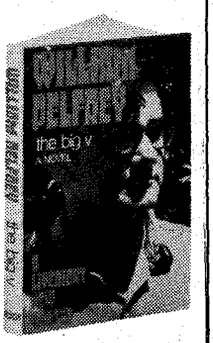

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Correspondence

Tax Loophole

Sirs:

Even by the tolerant standards of an election year, Mr. Dietsch's comment on tax loopholes, "Knowing a Loophole . . ." (May 27, 1972), is shocking. For example, he lists interest on state and municipal bonds as a tax "loophole," presumably to be closed. Quite apart from the formidable constitutional problem of *McCulloch* v. *Maryland*, and the policy of pluralism it represents, the exemption constitutes an indispensable subsidy for state and local public works, more needed now than ever. Why should Mr. Dietsch oppose a subsidy to public spending for schools, hospitals, and other community institutions? There is no explanation.

Moreover, the article remarks acidly on the famous list of rich men who paid no taxes on 1970 incomes. Many in this list achieved their status by giving 90 percent or more of their income to charity. During a sustained inflation which is forcing one autonomous institution after another to turn to the states for money, and equally forcing the states to turn to the federal government, I should have supposed that liberals should fight for every law and policy that encouraged a wide dispersal of independent influence in society, and postponed the day of the federal government as Minotaur and Moloch.

From the point of view of progressive public policy, neither the distinction between capital and income, nor the problem of double taxation of corporate income, are as simple as Mr. Dietsch's article suggests. Of course there are many revisions of the law in this area which should be considered to close genuine tax loopholes. But tax policy should not penalize private investment. If one wished, as I do, to discourage the growth of conglomerates, and force more investment decisions to submit to the arbitrament of the competitive market, a revival of the undistributed profits tax should be considered. But hardly the tax treatment of capital gains as ordinary income.

Eugene V. Rostow
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Nixon Watch

Sirs:

In his article "Plus for the President" (June 10, 1972), John Osborne says almost in passing:

> . . . and Nixon's desire to discourage speculation to the effect that he had serious hopes of persuading the Soviet leadership to do what it could to push the Hanoi leadership toward a more relaxed and amenable negotiating stance.

The statement implies acceptance of the idea that Nixon's moves are designed to improve our negotiating stance, that President Nixon is ready to settle the conflict through a negotiated agreement. It further suggests the belief that the North Vietnamese and the N.L.F. are being especially truculent, or imposing impossible conditions for a settlement.

I suggest that there is substantial evidence to indicate that the opposite is true. A three-man labor union group consisting of Harold Gibbons, International Vice President of the Teamsters Union, Clifton Caldwell, International Vice President of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters Union, and David Livingston, Secretary-Treasurer of the Distributive Workers of America recently travelled to Hanoi, returning with a message from Le Duc Tho, chief advisor to the North Vietnamese delegation in Paris. The three said:

> He proceeded without questions from us to set forth the shape of a peaceful settlement. He indicated that the Vietnamese were prepared to accept a three-segment coalition. This would include the PRG, that is the Provisional Revolutionary Government, or what our press calls the Vietcong. He said that only a minority of the PRG was communist. The second segment would be the present government without Thieu. The third segment would be unaffiliated groups. Buddhists, some people now in jail, some in exile, people not associated with the PRG or the Saigon government. . . . He said, we understand that, in your country, you do not favor a communist government and we do not believe one is appropriate in South Vietnam. . . . He said, we do not wish to humiliate the United States, we want peace with honor. And we understand that, politically, the United States Government must have a peace with honor.
>
> —The Distributive Worker, v.4,n.3 May, 1972, p. 12

Whether or not one choses to *believe* what Le Duc Tho has said, it is true that he has said it. If President Nixon feels that the kind of offer outlined above is unacceptable because it is *untrustworthy*, let him put the offer before the American people and say that. Instead he has continued to argue that the "other side" is being vituperative, unreasonable, and unrealistic.

Peter Livingston
Madison, Wisconsin

Kauffmann, *from page 24*

a Middle East quasi-revolutionary fantasy. Subjects are chosen to permit transvestites to appear in ultra-theatrical feminine garb: oriental costumes, harem trousers, ballet tutus, slinky gowns, with exaggerated mask-like make-ups, spangled eyelids, sunset cheeks, oversize mouths. There are some women in female roles and some males in male roles, but the general atmosphere is of a transvestite party, made public.

Sometimes there is parodic cleverness in the homosexual theater, but not in these two cases. The directing was garish and slovenly, the acting subamateur. Still, paradoxically, there is no feeling of failure, despite the boredom, because the intent is not to be theatrical in any traditional sense: the purpose is anti-theatrical. These "ridiculous" companies are ridiculing not themselves but theater and film as pop conventions—operettas, Tarzan films, Yvonne de Carlo films: which are ludicrous creations of a society that makes homosexuals feel ridiculous. For all the dogged air of gaiety, the deep tone, under the flouncing is desperation and revenge.

Of all the well-known playwrights of the Absurd, Fernando Arrabal is to me the slightest—a hack of the avant-garde. His latest production in New York, *And*

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They Put Handcuffs on the Flowers, is a religious-symbolic work about the fate of political prisoners, presumably Franco's, who have long been immured and are generally forgotten. (At the Mercer Arts Center.) The script strains for fearless impact but ends in sensationalism (such touches, for instance, as the eating of excrement or the fellation of Jesus). After the arty apparatus and tedious candor, all that remains is blatant pathos. If that seems a callous comment, Arrabal invites it because he pretends to the much more complex and profound level of Genet's writings about prisoners.

But Arrabal himself has directed this production, and he directs better than he writes. His staging sometimes has the slamming effect that he fumbles in his ideas and dialogue. The scenes in the cell, on one side of the stage, have a fierce compacted physicality and are well performed by George Shannon, Peter Maloney, and Ron Faber. Some of the images, like a body dragged across the stage on a big open white sheet, are vivid. If this production had run 40 minutes like Servan's, instead of an hour and 40 minutes, the play would have seemed better than it does: Arrabal's literary thinness would not have been so evident and his visual images could have been more highly selective.

A word about the Mercer Arts Center itself, the latest off-Broadway complex, joining the (figurative) society of LaMama and the Public Theater. MAC, which is in a recently renovated building on Mercer Street, contains four theaters, a cabaret theater, a multi-media workshop, studios, a café-restaurant, a bar, and a boutique! Besides the Arrabal, MAC at present houses a dramatization of Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and the improvisational revue *The Proposition*, among others.

Of these off-Broadway centers, only LaMama has so far developed anything like an esthetic character, even in the most general sense. The Public apparently wants to be like a good department store, with something for everybody. In content, the Mercer is so far much the same; in looks, quite different. The decor of the Mercer is clearly youth-oriented, with a strong suggestion of the Drug Stores in Paris and Munich and elsewhere. Socially, at least, it's interesting. People who prattle knowingly that young people today are concerned only with films ought to see the Mercer on a weekend.

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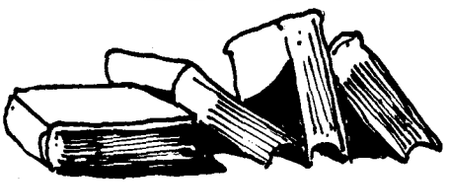

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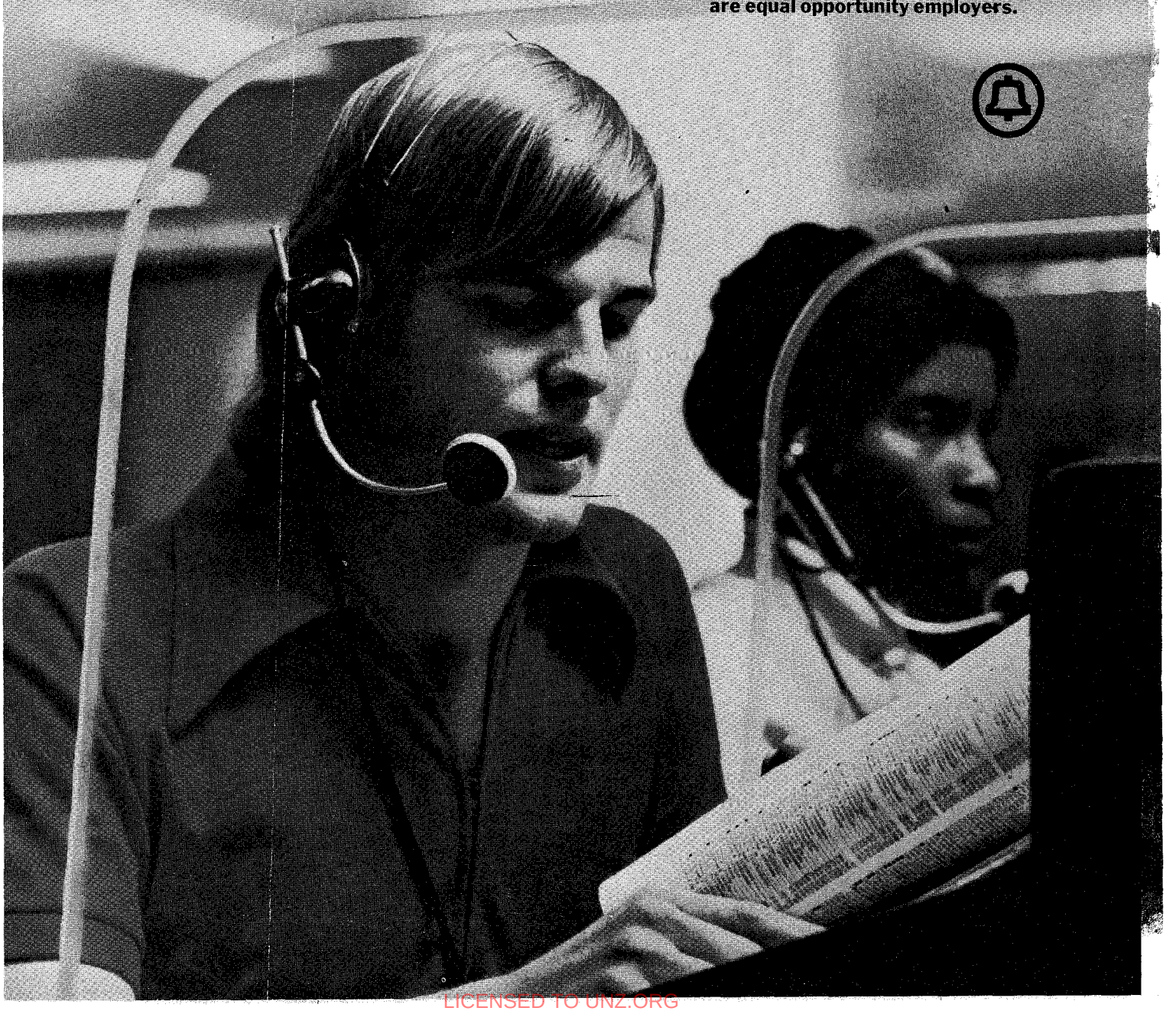

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